A.T. ARIYARATNE
COLLECTED WORKS

VOLUME VIII

EDITED BY
NANDASENA RATNAPALA

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Nandasena Ratnapala

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A. T. Ariyaratne

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INTRODUCTION

In this volume I have collected almost all the recent writings of Dr.A.T.Ariyaratne. Only two essays go back to 1995, that is the first essay "From a decade of brain to a millennium of the mind" and "Buddhist Economics." All the other contributions belong to the 21st century.

It is interesting to note that these lectures were delivered in many countries – i.e. Japan, Australia, US, Germany, India and Sri Lanka. They deal with various topics and areas of interest. Dr.Ariyaratna's fertile mind and varied experiences are found in all of these. We come across one of the foremost brains of the 20th and 21st centuries at work tackling modern Problems.

In all these lectures one finds the Sarvodaya Philosophy and attitudes developed and nurtured by him addressing the different problems. This unique philosophy, inspired first by Mahathma Gandhi and Vinobha Bhave, was developed further by Dr. Ariyaratne in Sri Lanka. Here in this development influence of Buddhism gave Sri Lankan Sarvodaya a fresh interpretation.

What we see in these lectures are Dr.Ariyaratna's responses to varieties of challenges in the modern era. In the first lecture he draws a close analogy between the healing process of a physician and that of a responsible citizen trying to re-discover and reestablish an optimum healing process in our ailing society. His analogy is appropriate and he wants to look at the total society and global problems. "No fragmentary approach would take us very far. We have to give a lead in creating a critical mass of consciousness in people so that a radical shift in their perception of realities is facilitated".

He focusses his attention on non-violent struggles for social and economic justice. The emphasis on non-violence is important, because every where in the world people resort to violence in order to achieve economic and social justice and this has become the fashion.

He looks at this problem from both Buddhistic view – point and the experiences that Sri Lanka had undergone in the past. He shows here how important is for the Buddhists to follow the five precepts. He also emphasizes the duty of the state to formulate a policy that enables this moral conduct "i.e." the five precepts and how the Buddhists could maintain it.

Sarvodaya in Sri Lanka in its initial experiment at Kanatholuwa (Ratnapala, the Beginnings of Sarvodaya 1978, Colombo) introduced participatory development and continued it ever since. The shramadanas were the first step of participatory development. At the time the term

shramadana was not known, Sarvodaya introduced and popularized it. It was thereafter that the term was widely used.

Participatory development is the main strategy of Sarvodaya. Dr.Ariyaratne sees in it a global need. It is a human centred way of development and contributes to the awakening of first the individual, and then the community.

In the development process Dr.Ariyaratne values non-violence. His advocacy of non-violence to combat social and political problems has a great need today. Non-violence is propagated by Mahathma Gandhi. It is a way of life of the Buddhists. Sarvodaya utilises in its process of development. This process of development is activated non-violent practices. Step by step in every village and town, non-violence was utilised as a strategy. It was also used in the family and the community, then extended to society. Non-violence in the society of today is not easy to be established. Even the media tastes of extreme fanaticism in which seeds of extremism are readily planted even through media. Violence is thus glorified. Wide publicity is given to fanatical and terrorist acts. This same publicity is not given to peaceful activities.

Dr. Ariyaratne cites an example: On 29th August 1980 Sarvodaya made a call to people in Colombo to come and attend a programme of 3 hours meditation for peace. Nearly 200,000 came and participated in it. This was a great example of self-discipline. "It is an affirmation that problems in the world can be resolved without resorting to violence". The same self-discipline of the people was exhibited when thousands of people in the north attended such a meditation peace process recently. (in 2006).

Dr.Ariyaratne has learnt enormously from the happenings in Sri Lanka at recent times. He obstructs the divided society in Sri Lanka today and talk of how Sarvodaya experiences would be helpful here. In the activities of Sarvodaya from 1959 we observe how people from various religions and communities were brought together. Sarvodaya first worked among an under-privileged rural community in the Sinhalese speaking areas and then moved into a similar under-privileged village in the Tamil speaking areas. Sarvodaya brought different religions and different communities to work together forgetting communal or religious differences.

"Reawakening aims at attaining the goal of helping in uplifting and re-uniting the affected communities into the integral scheme of life. This reawakening programme aims at integrating the communities so that they take their equal place among the thousands of other Sarvodaya villages in the country participating in all the gramaseva divisions, provincial and national programmes"

Sarvodaya has recognized the importance of education in developing man. Even in the initial stages at Kanatholuwa education, both informal and formal was utilized as a tool. Sarvodaya used informal education at this time when no importance to it was attached to it.

According to Sarvodaya no formal education system, very many imposed on people, has been able to create a society where poverty does not perpetuate.

Dr. Ariyaratne, in Sir Baron Jayatilaka lecture speaks of a Buddhist vision of society. It should not be a necessarily a Buddhist vision or a vision of the Buddhist. It is a vision that could be open to anyone. The emphasis or on the vision based on Buddhist teachings that helps to overcome the serious challenges of human life. He thus argues for a common vision based on topical Buddhist teachings.

Dr. Ariyaratne speaks of this Buddhist vision which could be based on Metta or loving kindness. In this vision all mankind are brothers and sisters. It extends beyond that even to the environment. All plants, animals etc. are treated with respect and without exploitation. Even in this process of development natural resources should never be exploited only for the benefit of humans.

Dr. Ariyaratne looks back at the totality of Sarvodaya experiences in his essay on Preservation. Development and Reconciliation in the work of Sarvodaya movement. It is a lecture in which he looks at Sarvodaya from a historical and sociological point of view. He observes how the Sarvodaya movement grew particularly in the preservation, development and reconciliation process. He speaks about empowering people beginning from personality awakening to family awakening and village awakening leading to the awakening of the entire nation (Deshodaya).

Full participatory political system is Sarvodaya's aim. It can only be reached by establishing small unit of power at the village level. The decision-making, executing and monitoring power should be in the hands of the people.

The village units of power or the social political and cultural energy emanating from it will have a synergy effect and would be the power at country level.

Dr. Ariyaratne's attention is, at most times, focusses on the role of people and organizations in situation of conflict. One such role that of religions peoples is important to resolve conflict. For this we must first establish peace within ourselves. This should follow our learning to respect all life. Vigilance on the part of religious people about challenges in international scenario and the addition to their commitments in the local and national situations are necessary.

In his final essay published separately by Vishva Lekha Dr.Ariyaratna deals with Buddhist Economic Theory and Practices. It was the late Doctor Scheumacher who first drew our attention to Buddhist Economics. Dr.Ariyaratne analyses Buddhist Economics in a wider perspective.

Buddhist Economic Theory and practice is applied in the Sarvodaya Shramadana Development process. A detail analysis is given in this book.

The application of Buddhist theories is observed in Sarvodaya programmes. The concept of right livelihood, a cardinal aspect of Buddhist teachings, is discussed.

"During a period close upon four decades, the Sarvodaya movement has used the concept of right livelihood in its work in Sri Lankan communities in all parts of the country representative of all ethnic and religious groups. The essence of the concept is the engagement of all in constructive activities. A major reason for Sarvodaya being able to do so is that inspite of the many changes affecting the life of the people, the large majority of the communities still hold on to the traditional values".

In this volume we see Dr.Ariyaratna's mind as it developed during the last decades. Wide travel, in Sri Lanka almost to every village, and in the world to many a country, has added to his experiences new insights. Earlier seven volumes, would be a refreshing experience – the work of a first class philosophical mind at work.

May he live long enjoying this long life to give the benefit of his deep philosophy and varied experience. In him we see not only a philosopher but also a man of action, a social warrior, a social reformer and above all, a complete man.

Nandasena Ratnapala

FROM A DECADE OF THE BRAIN TO A MILLENNIUM OF THE MIND

Prof. Nimal Senanayake, the President of the Sri Lanka Medical Association, Prof. Harry Meinadi, my respected friend from the Netherlands, and other eminent presenters from abroad, Prof. Padmajeewa Ganepola and other distinguished invitees, scholars and participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I thank Prof. Nimal Senanayake, the President of the Sri Lanka Medical Association and the Council for inviting me to be the Chief Guest at the 112th Academic Sessions of the Association. I consider it as an honour you have given to the Sarvodaya Movement of Sri Lanka for which I have dedicated myself for over four decades. In the early eighties we in Sarvodaya had the privilege of participating in an Epilepsy Research Project initiated by Prof. Nimal Senanayake with the co-operation of Prof. Dr. Harry Meinadi from the Netherlands who is present here today. From that time to this day Prof. Nimal Senanayake has been a close friend, adviser and an inspirer for our work carried out with most poor and powerless communities of Sri Lanka.

Between then and now, Professor Senanayake's hard work, his genuine search after reality and research into his chosen area of study and concern, namely, epilepsy and neuro-physiological studies, have brought him national and international recognition as an academic of the highest order. Prof. Senanayake has achieved excellence not only as a physician and an academic but also as a community educator especially through the electronic and film media. We are proud of him and wish him good health and long life for greater service for the well-being of our country and humanity in general.

The theme you have selected for the current academic sessions, namely, "From a Decade of the Brain to a Millennium of the Mind" is most appropriate, timely and highly stimulating. It is a theme that

is challenging the conceptual left overs from an ill-conceived world view which originated in the seventeenth century. It is a theme challenging the intelligence of all thinking people to radically review, reconsider and rebuilt the methodologies and technologies pertaining to every aspect of human life. It is a theme that is beckoning us for a revolutionary transformation of all our organizational and institutional arrangements, almost in every field of human activity.

You are members of the medical profession. Therefore, it is natural that you have first to think of bringing about a constructive and progressive transformation of your area of involvement, namely, healing and medicine, and related fields. This has to be done at the level of the mind or consciousness, technologies and structures. But that is not enough. We have to relate all that we do to everything and everybody else in the universe. Above all we have to remember that our own "being" is the most important factor that counts in the new Millennium of the Mind. In the words of Albert Einstein as quoted in the book Full Catastrophy Living by Jon Kabat-Zinn "When we identify ourselves with a permanent solid 'self' it is a delusion of consciousness, a form of self-imprisonment. The true value of a human being is derived primarily by the measure and sense in which he has attained liberation from the self" Unquote.

The first words I read as I entered the Chemistry Laboratory of Mahinda College, Galle, were : "Science is the quest of man towards a universal knowledge of nature." These words were boldly written on the wall. As a young keen student of science these words struck in my mind into my adulthood. It near occurred to me that this quest towards a universal knowledge of nature did not include my own "being" as something important to understand. Of course it may have included my brain. Still for all from my childhood my culture had taught me the importance of the Mind and the self-knowledge, purification of the mind and enlightenment as the ultimate goals in life.

The seventeenth century philosopher Rene Descarte' divided everything in the universe to matter and mind. Francis Bacon

wanted nature to serve man as a slave. Isaac Newton formulated the mathematical laws and developed the mechanical model of the universe which to a great extent still dominates our thinking. I am sure that you will agree with me that most of even the present day medical science that is practised is conditioned by this mechanistic model. The classical science of the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries which those scientists championed dominated the world enslaving the whole of humanity with a materialistic and mechanistic world view.

Others like Thomas Hobb and John Locke carried this materialistic view into field of politics and economics. At the close of the 19th century classical science had successfully paved the way to build a world where the human being was alienated from himself, his family and the community and the natural environment itself. The twentieth century is the most murderous century human society had ever lived through. During the first eighty seven years of this century, it has been calculated by some researchers, that more than double the number of all people killed in the previous centuries, were killed by democide and wars. This does not include homicides and suicides. This is not so only in terms of loss of human lives and other living forms but also from the point of view of the destruction of life-support systems on our planet. Extinction of numerous species from our planet has become a daily occurrence.

Discovery of Radio Activity in 1896 by Henry Becquerel, Albert Einestein's Theory of Relativity, development of Quantum Mechanics and enunciation of the Principle of Uncertainty have brought us to a new era of nuclear science. No longer is our search for knowledge limited by sensory perceptions of a three-dimensional world. It is no longer the intellectual, empirical or measurable functions of our brain that are at our disposal but more so the intuitive part of our brain, our mind, that is challenging us to make a quantum jump into the twenty first century, into the new Millennium.

Our brains are inundated with information coming from micro discoveries inside the atom to macro discoveries of the limitless

universe. Yet our mind-distance between the doctor and the patient, teacher and pupil, producer and consumer, parent and the child, between one person and another is ever on the increase, The Millennium of the Mind is forcing us to close this distance and expand our consciousness to be whole beings.

The words "health" and "healing" are supposed to have come from the same Anglo-Saxon root as "whole" and "holy". Now we know that most diseases may be defined as a failure of the healing process. We know that pain and disease are not synonymous. We know that health is a process. It is not so much the absence of disease as much as it is the presence of an optimal healing process. This is equally true for the understanding of the health of our organizations and institutions most of which I believe are far from healthy.

Albert Einstein, articulated more than once, the importance of seeing the whole. He demonstrated the unity of time and space, and matter and energy. Buddha's teaching of Paticca Samuppada, the Theory of Dependent Origination, interconnectedness of all and everything, advocates us to see the whole. Nothing arises from a single cause.

It has been shown that the first glimmerings of self-consciousness in us are developed when we reach the age of nine months. Throughout childhood this capacity of self-awareness increases. Then as we reach early adolescence we begin to develop self-observation. This "observing ego" as some call it results in losing some of our spontaneity we had in childhood. However most of us seem to stop this self-observing process as adults. Only a few do continue to develop their psycho-spiritual power and are in the process of becoming whole and holy. Self-consciousness of self and others into ever widening organizations such as families and communities and finally the entire living and non-living world.

Last month I spend a day with Dr. Joh Kabat-Zinn in Boston. He has successfully implemented what is called The Program of the Stress Reduction Clinic at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center. Here is a concrete example of combining medical

science with meditation. He explained how the words "medicine" and "meditation" come from the Latin 'mederi' which means to "cure". Mederi itself is said to be derived from an earlier Indo-European root meaning "to measure".

The word "measure" in this context has a deeper meaning compared to dimensions of an object based on an external standard. Medicine seen in this light, he says, is 'right inward measure' which has to be restored when it is disturbed by disease, illness or injury. Meditation by the same token is perceiving directly by the 'right inward measure' of one's own being through careful non-judgmental self-observation. So in the field of medicine, like in meditation, the concept of wholeness has come to be accepted.

Today we are living in a world modeled after classical scientific concepts founded on dominance of matter over mind. We all seem to be caught in a rat race from which we find it difficult to escape. We have no time to look into our own being. Instead of self-awareness, self-centredness and competitiveness seem to dominate every sector of our society. When you see some doctors rushing from public service to private practice and back, I wonder how many of them can find time to awaken their whole being or personality. It is the same with teachers running from public educational duties to tuition classes. Students prepare for competitive examinations but lack time for self-examination. Those who are in the wealth amassment vocation and competitive politics have generally forgotten the existence of a precious mind within them and they seem to have discarded all value systems for the sake of acquiring wealth and gaining and retaining power. We seem to have forgotten the linkages between ethics, concentration, wisdom and joy of living.

The whole society appears to be sick and diseased. We cannot any longer be a part of the problem. We have to be a part of the solution. The Massachusetts Medical Center and many other scientific institutions in the West are contributing to replace the old fragmentary world view with a new vision of wholeness. They use meditation based on awareness of the breadth (*Anapana Sati*), practice of loving kindness (*Metta*) and Insight Meditation

(*Vipassana*). They have opened new vistas not only for overcoming pain and for healing but also for the art of dying with understanding. I am happy that new researches done on rebirth have acceptance in most scientific communities today.

The medical profession may be the most respected and certainly the most sought after profession today. A random visit to any government or private medical or health facility and seeing increasing numbers of people coming to seek your help will give you proof of what I say. Can we reverse this process by doctors launching an all out island-wide programme of going to the people and educating them that healing or getting healed is mostly in their own hands. I am not speaking here in a literal sense. What I am trying to say is that doctors should give a leadership to their prospective clients to traverse the path of mind-body together and not separately. They should do so in a total living environment and not cloistered in their places of work. This equally applies to all members of the judiciary and legal profession, teachers and others. This is the path of insight, wisdom, peace and wholeness.

We witness today, to our horror, waves after waves of personal violence, an increasing trend of organized group violence, a civil war the end of which cannot be expected in the near future, a system of law and order which is breaking down in spite of more laws being passed by the legislature, and, structural or legally instituted forms of economic and political violence, not to speak of increasing physical and mental illnesses and disorders.

It is my belief that we have to take them on as a total societal or global problem. No fragmentary approaches would take us very far. We have to give a lead in creating a critical mass of consciousness in people so that a radical shift in their perception or reality is facilitated. Then on attitudes will change, new systems will emerge and alternative institutional arrangements in politics and economies will be innovated.

'In the same way you as doctors are trying to reestablish an optimal healing process in a diseased patient all of us, laymen as well as professionals, as responsible citizens in society have to rediscover and reestablish an optimum healing processes in our

ailing societies. This is the only way to recover the health of our society. A diseased society will always pollute its air, water and food, destroy the ecological balance and psychological harmony and violate all ethical values. The Millennium of the Mind demands us to look within ourselves and practice concentration to clean our minds of all thoughts springing from sense bases and leave space for intuitive wisdom and potential to flourish. As a contribution to assist this process of facilitating the individuals to perceive 'the right inward measure' we in Sarvodaya have just opened a place called Vishva Niketan near our Headquarters in Moratuwa. Vishva Niketan means a universal home for meditation and building peace within and without ourselves to contribute to the building of the critical mass of spiritual consciousness that would globally influence all humans who will be the inheritors of the Millennium of the Mind.

I will conclude my remarks with an open invitation to all of you to use Vishva Niketan after your fascinating journey to the Millennium of the Mind at this Sessions. I wish the 112th Academic Sessions of the SLMA all success.

Thank you.

Address by the Chief Guest Dr. A.T. Ariyaratne President, Sarvodaya Movement at the Inauguration of the 112th Anniversary Academic Sessions 1999 of the Sri Lanka Medical Association, Kandy - March 24. 1999

THE NON VIOLENT STRUGGLE FOR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

I express my gratitude and thanks to the Society for Buddhist Christian Studies for inviting me to its 6th International Conference which is held at Pacific Lutheran University, Takoma. I am specially grateful to my friends Professor Paul Ingram, the Conference Director and Ms. Barbara Fields Bernstein, the Programme Coordinator whose persuasive letters and e-mails made me leave my little Ashram, Vishva Niketan, The International Peace and Meditation Centre, from where I continue my work, to come here. I teach meditation to groups of people who go back to their provinces and organize mass peace meditation programmes with the participation of five to ten thousand people every month. By this process we are trying to create a critical mass of spiritual consciousness which I strongly believe is the only way that we can create a new society.

The theme I have been asked to speak on is "The Non Violent Struggle for Economic and Social Justice". In essence very few countries in the world are politically and economically structured based on Non- Violence and Respect for Life to build peace, prosperity and happiness in the world. It is hardly possible to identify a nation which can be shown as an example where this fundamental value has been recognized when building formal political and economic structures. Under these circumstances non-violence can be used only by voluntary organizations in transforming social, political and economic structures.

In this paper the attempt we in Sri Lanka made for over four decades based on the teachings of the Buddha to build a non-violent social order is described. I have to caution the reader that what I have attempted to do here is to put into a theoretical framework a series of experiments made based on Buddhist teachings. In other words theory follows practice in this paper.

A Buddhist Approach to Social and Economic Development

Buddha's message is timeless. It is not confined to any particular country or people. He showed a way where human beings can attain complete self realisation while living a life in harmonious relationships with other human beings, the rest of the sentient beings and nature as a whole. His teachings and the ethical values he propounded are as valid today as they were during the time he was alive in the 6th century B.C.

There were times when rulers of nations like Emperor Asoka of India and many others in Sri Lanka, Burma, Siam and other Asian countries attempted to follow His teachings in all aspects of life in their nations. Some of these are cited as models of peaceful, harmonious and happy societies. However, in the context of the world today, we no longer find such models as most countries in Asia were subjected to colonial rule for long periods of time. During the colonial period the Buddhist art of governance and the science of social and economic development were overpowered by the dominant values and structures from the Western powers. In spite of five centuries of such a materialistic and unbalanced approach to social and economic development in our countries there were local communities and groups who survived and struggled to retain some of those Buddhist values and attempted to manage their social and economic relationships in somewhat of a Buddhist way.

Elements of the Buddhist Society

Coming to my country Sri Lanka, even today, it is referred to as a Buddhist country. Whenever a national tragedy occurs even those who do not profess Buddhism are quick to ask the question. "How can this kind of thing happen in a Buddhist country"? I remember when we experienced the horrendous wave of communal riots for a couple of days in July 1983, a very respected Christian dignitary came to my house and asked the same question. "How can this happen in our Buddhist country"? We can now ask other questions like "How can Sri Lanka have a high suicide rate? How can there be so many homicides? How can we explain the high rate of alcoholism and drug abuse in our country? How can there be so much child abuse? How can there be a civil war - which is being misnamed a communal war - which takes hundreds of lives every month and

maims thousands of others - going on for the last 17 years? How can all these things happen in a Buddhist country?" I venture to say that though we have a majority of people who are categorized as Buddhists, still we do not have a Buddhist society as such.

One can call a society a Buddhist society if two basic conditions are satisfied. Firstly, as citizens the majority of people or a critical mass of the population should follow the basic tenets of Buddhism. They should accept and respect Buddha as their teacher, follow the Dhamma the doctrine He enunciated, and emulate and take care of the Sangha, the enlightened order of monks who live saintly lives and teach His Dhamma both by precept and by example. Then the basic minimum, the ethical code against killing, thieving, sexual misconduct, lying and intoxication, should be the guiding foundation for the personal conduct of human beings. As citizens we do not sufficiently satisfy this first condition of respecting the Triple Gem and following the Five Precepts.

Secondly, the guiding principles of the State should be formulated in such a way that the above code of moral conduct is facilitated. The State should abstain from doing anything that would encourage people to break the Five Precepts. The State should also reflect the spirit of Buddhism in areas that together determine the direction and value content of the society. These six areas are the spiritual awakening of human beings, interpersonal moral relationships between individuals, the spiritual and moral content of the total culture of society, the criteria that determine the social development of society, the principles and policies on which the economic development of the nation is guided and the principles on which the system of government is established. When all these six sectors are taken into consideration I do not see in any of them the content and spirit of a Buddhist society being consciously and judiciously followed by the State. This may be true for other Buddhist countries as well.

On the contrary, instead of a total vision as propounded by the Buddha, alien and materialistic ideological norms and numerous amateurish and adventurous policies are followed in all these sectors.

The Buddhist Approach to Development

In a country we have both a formal and an informal sector. In the formal sector the government and private sectors are included. It is this formal sector that has relationships with the inter-governmental organizations and multi-national corporations. The informal sector comprises the small communities and groups whose social and economic transactions do not go into public accounting statistics. The informal sector is ignored and bypassed by formal economic and social development policy-makers and project implementers.

However, if a Buddhist approach to economic and social development is followed by anyone, it is to be found in this informal sector. Sometimes there are informal sector organizations who have succeeded in discovering, harnessing and organizing community initiatives for a Buddhist model of social and economic development. Of these, the one I am most familiar with is the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement of Sri Lanka which has experimented with this model for the last 40 years. In this paper I will be making references to this Movement to demonstrate the practicability of the Buddhist approach to social and economic development even in modern times, particularly in rural areas.

The Buddha means the Awakened One. All human beings have the potential to awaken one's personality to the fullest by practising '*Dana*' - which means giving, beneficence or righteous sharing, '*Sila*' or moral principles, and '*Bhavana*' or cultivating right-mindfulness. Development of morality, cultivation of the skill to be mindful every moment and right-awareness help the human personality to cultivate supreme wisdom. This is what the Buddha achieved and advocated to the seekers after truth who try to attain supreme happiness.

The essence of Buddha's teachings is found in His teachings on the Four Noble Truths, the Noble Eight-Fold Path and the '*Paticca Samuppada Dhamma*' - Theory of Dependent Origination. These teachings have to be understood and practiced by each individual relying on oneself. No teacher, not even the Buddha, can liberate a person. All that an outsider can do is to guide persons who are seek-

ing after the Truth. However, Buddha's teachings also abound with guidelines as to how a social, economic and political environment can be achieved and sustained which helps the individual to follow a path of self-purification. In this paper we are interested in such attempts.

In the ultimate sense, all attempts by all sectors, formal or informal, should be for the attainment of the highest happiness for all. When Buddha had 60 monks who had attained full enlightenment he beseeched them "Oh, monks, Go forth to the world disseminating the Dhamma, (the teaching) for the well-being, the happiness of as many people as possible. No two should go in one direction." The well-being, the happiness and the awakening of all is the objective of the Buddhist approach to social, economic and political development.

In the Buddhist perspective, development is an awakening process. Sustainable development is the capacity of a community to maintain the conditions under which such an awakening is possible not only for the present generation but for the future generations as well. It is a sustained effort to awaken in all aspects, spiritual and ethical as well as social and economic, the individual, the family, the community, rural as well as urban groups, nations and the world community. In the teachings of the Buddha in numerous discourses he has given advice on how this awakening from the individual to the global level could be achieved.

In the Sarvodaya Movement programmes have been developed over the years in accordance with the Buddha's teachings for awakening of all. Now I will examine some of these beginning with the social and economic development of the village community.

The Buddhist Vision in Action

It is estimated that there are about 25,000 villages in Sri Lanka. Out of these, Sarvodaya programmes are implemented in varying degrees in about 11,300 of them. During Buddha's time, in India there were small democratically governed kingdoms or Village Republics like those of Liccavis and Vajjins. Lord Buddha cited these communities possessed certain characteristics that empow-

ered them to stand against any outside interference. Mahatma Gandhi, twenty-five centuries later, again emphasized the fact that an ideal society could be built if India was transformed into a Commonwealth of Village Republics. According to the Buddha, the salient features of these communities were frequent meetings of the community; community participation in decision-making; assembling in peace, discussing in peace and dispersing in peace; adhering to the laws that prevailed; not imposing laws that cannot be obeyed; protection and well-being of children, women, the sick, the disabled and the elderly; continuing traditional cultural events without a break, and inviting, looking after and learning from the wise such as those monks and recluses who have abandoned the household life in search of spiritual enlightenment.

The Buddhist approach to development of communities should therefore begin with such social motivation, mobilization and organization as explained above in the '*Saptha Aparihaniya Dharma*' or the seven modes of conduct of a group that lead to a non-degenerative society. Practicing sharing of one's time, thought, efforts, knowledge and resources (*Shramadana*), using a language that is pleasant and non offensive (*Priya-vacana*), getting the community to engage in constructive work (*Artha-charya*) and treating all as equals and giving due respect to all irrespective of various social divisions (*Samanathmatha*) are the four salient social ethics that Buddhism promotes. In organizing villages, the Sarvodaya Movement tries to create a physical, social and psychological environment through Shramadana Camps which enables them to satisfy their basic community needs such as access roads to a village, construction, repair and maintenance of irrigation facilities, community housing, community sanitation and health facilities, environmental protection and so on. What comes to the forefront in such activities is the Buddhist teaching on self-reliance and community participation for self-development. Dependence on external handouts is not the Buddhist way.

Personality Awakening

The freedom and happiness of the human being is at the centre of the Buddhist approach to progress. Human personality awakening is the foremost item in the Buddhist agenda. No country can

progress without its citizens reaching a high level of spiritual and moral attainment. It is only with this kind of personality awakening that proper relationships with fellow human beings and the right use of resources can be utilized for the social development of a country. In the Buddhist teachings both spiritual-moral development and socio-economic development are equally emphasized and are expected to take place simultaneously and in a balanced way. Sri Lanka was known both as an island of righteousness (Dharmadeepa) and a nation of economic prosperity (Dhanyagara) in the past.

In the Buddhist agenda of development, therefore, due attention is given to the upbringing of children from their conception in the mother's womb to the awakening of human personalities from birth to death. As far as the human life is concerned, great emphasis is given to pre-natal care, childhood (from birth to year 16), youth (16-35years), middle age (35-60 years) and old age (60 years +). In a Buddhist program of economic and social development emphasis is given to the satisfaction of basic human needs pertaining to each of these age groups, followed by secondary needs and tertiary needs of families and communities. What is important is not catering to the greed in people, but meeting the needs of people. When we take the above mentioned five human groups we have to consider what are the needs they have which have to be satisfied? As we live amidst poverty in Asia our priority should be not to create a small minority of affluent people but to liberate the majority of people who are poor from that state of poverty. Buddha showed us a Middle Way to liberate ourselves from the sufferings in this cycle of births and deaths, discarding both self-mortification and self-indulgence. The best course of action in the Buddhist spirit we can follow is to have as our aim a no-poverty and no-affluence society.

Elements of Social Development

What are the components that go into social development and how can these be measured at any given time to determine whether a society is progressing or degenerating? In the Sarvodaya Movement they have recognized the following elements that should be considered when planning or implementing social development programmes.

Leadership - In any society, whether it is the family, a community or a bigger social unit, leadership plays a very important role. Similarly, even in different sectors of social activity such as education, health, agriculture, crafts, governance, law and security, religious orders, good leadership is an essential element. Buddha's discourses abound with examples of such leadership. For example, for a political leader or a king he has enumerated ten principles of a good ruler (*Dasa Raja Dharma*)

They are-

1. Sharing (*Dana*), of wealth, knowledge, skills and even power and authority.
2. Morality (*Sila*), good conduct
3. Beneficence (*Pariccaga*), This can be interpreted as recognition and promotion of talent.
4. Straightforwardness
5. Impartiality in judgement
6. Composure in conduct
7. Non-hatred
8. Non-violence
9. Patience
10. Non-revenge

At the very beginning of the *Karaniya Metta Sutta* are mentioned the excellent human qualities such as dexterity, uprightness, exceedingly uprightness, gentleness, courteousness, humility and simplicity, we the humans should develop.

Looking at our societies today, leaders fall far short of these leadership attributes. When leaders are not exemplary in their conduct the whole society degenerates.

Lawlessness, lack of discipline, bribery and corruption, increase in pollution and environmental destruction and many other such social evils are caused and aggravated by lack of leadership. When parents and teachers fall short of these leadership qualities, discipline within families and educational institutions cannot be maintained. Therefore, development of leadership is indispensable for social development. The Sarvodaya programmes at community level aim to develop good leaders at different levels such as in children's groups, youth groups, mothers' groups, farm-

ers' groups, elders' groups and in the community as a whole. Foundations for good leadership should be laid early.

Participation - In Buddhism nothing is attributed to an outside power that determines our lives. We ourselves are responsible for the state of our life and society. Therefore, in every possible way we should participate in all matters that influence our lives. People's participation in bringing about social progress is indispensable in the Buddhist perception of development. Participation is emphasized very much in the Saptha Aparihāraniya Dharma we have referred to earlier in this paper. In the Sarvodaya Movement both leadership training and participatory action are promoted by organizing the village community into pre-school groups, children's groups, youth groups, mothers' groups, farmers' groups, elders' groups and so on. Functional leadership that emerges in the activities they themselves plan and carry out pertaining to the satisfaction of basic human needs brings about a high level of social consciousness and also confidence in themselves.

Education - The level of education in a community is a measure that can be used to find out the degree of social development in that community. Here education is not merely book learning or passing examinations. Education in the first instance is a process by which human personality is awakened. What is required is a kind of education for life, through life and throughout life as Mahatma Gandhi mentioned. It is educating not only the head, but also the hearts and limbs. A truly educated person has a penetrative heart and a disciplined mind. Such a person does not hesitate to do anything socially beneficial including manual labour. Every constructive activity that promotes the well-being of people is held in high dignity. Generally, bookish, certificate-oriented, job-seeking education not only stunts the growth of one's personality, but also creates misfits in society. A Buddhist-oriented educational system on the other hand, whether formal, non-formal or informal education, is incorporated into one total process, is certainly a mark of a progressive society. The community development programmes of the Sarvodaya movement are essentially educational programmes which are designed, among other considerations, to correct the imbalances arising from a formal education system which still suffers from its colo-

nial inheritance. In fact the Sarvodaya Movement started as a corrective response to this ineffective school system.

Health - The level of health in a society is another criterion of social progress. Not only personal health but also community health and environmental health are important. Lord Buddha referred to good health as the greatest gain. Today we are faced with diseases brought about both poverty and affluence. Not only material poverty but also spiritual poverty has contributed to the degeneration of health in the community as a whole. In addition to the conventional diseases, those terminal diseases such as AIDS are the result of a breakdown of the moral order of our society. The need for promotion of mental health is of utmost importance at present times. Buddha showed us the way through the meditational practices he advocated.

Human Rights and Duties - In Buddhism both rights and duties are emphasized in great detail. Lord Buddha has taught us the principles on which we as individuals, families and communities should relate to one another. When parents fall short of their duties towards children or children towards parents; or teachers towards students and students towards teachers; or employers toward their employees and employees towards their employers; rulers towards the ruled and the ruled towards the rulers; in such a social milieu, human society becomes chaotic.

Environmental Protection - This is another criterion for social progress. Our consciousness about the environment has been lost during the last half a century. We have destroyed our forests, polluted our rivers and poisoned our soil. We have endangered our life support systems. Sometimes these things were done in the name of development. But the result was actually the opposite. In this sector we are becoming increasingly degenerative and unless the Buddhist approach to life, with contentment as the biggest wealth, is accepted and a simple lifestyle is followed we will make our lands uninhabitable.

Social Integration - While preserving our cultural identities, if we can live together in peace and harmony our society will progress. Today this is not happening. Instead of using our diversity as a very important resource for progress we have made it a reason for con-

flict. This has today multiplied into a protracted civil war in Sri Lanka which has been going on for over 15 years now. No social development is possible unless the diverse communities and groups that comprise such a community learn to live with respect for one another. The Buddhist approach is certainly not sectarian. This is a holistic approach where the humanity is considered as one large family.

Women and Children - In peaceful times as well as times of social conflict and disturbance, those who suffer most are the women and children. As a result of the civil war that is going on, this kind of suffering has come to almost every village and house both in the north and south. Malnutrition of children and lack of equal rights for women, which already existed in our society, have been aggravated by the conflict situation in the country. For social development, therefore, it is necessary - both in 'normal' times and at times of war - that there is an accepted norm that women and children should be safeguarded at all times. The standard by which we can judge any civilized society is the status it affords to its women and the protection it offers its children.

Peace - Peace is not just absence of war. Peace is a state of consciousness dynamically maintained by the people in a society where the evils of greed, hatred and ignorance are reduced to a minimum and, non-greed and non-hatred are increased to the maximum.

In the beginning of the 16th century when the Portuguese conquered the maritime provinces of Sri Lanka and were committing atrocities on people to force them to embrace the Catholic religion, the King of Kandy arranged for the Buddhists, Hindus and Muslims to come into the Kandyan Kingdom and provided them with villages to live in safety. Later when the Dutch invaded the Portuguese-occupied areas and started persecuting the Catholics, similar action was taken by the King of Kandy to provide Catholics safety in the Kandyan Kingdom. When the Dutch-occupied territories were handed over to the British in 1798 and later in 1815 the control of the whole country was taken over by them, the Buddhists as the majority were subjected in more subtle ways to the violations of their rights. However the Buddhists never violated their tradi-

tional Buddhist values of tolerance and treated people of all faiths with respect. Therefore I do not see any reason why, with right-understanding by non-Buddhists as well, more inter-faith harmony cannot be built in our country. What is important is not only to co-exist without conflict but also to co-operate actively to combat all evils including crimes and war. Political leaders can then address themselves to the political and economic causes that have brought about the present state of social degeneration and conflict.

Buddhist Approach to Economics

A discussion of society cannot be divorced from a discussion of economics. In order to properly analyse the make-up of a society, it is important to discuss the way that it organizes its economy, the value that it places on different types of economic activity and the morality associated with different economic enterprises. At the time of the Buddha, over 2500 years ago, there was no 'Science' of Economics as we find today. Yet most activities that are studied today under the subject of Economics were going on during his time also, though it was a comparatively primitive economy. There was production, distribution, consumption exchange of goods and services, use of money as a medium exchange, division of labour, profit-making, taxation and so on. That was a period of economic transition where trade was coming increasingly into a previously agricultural and cattle-breeding economy. In fact there was a new very wealthy class of businessmen who were referred to as setthis.

The State dominated over the ownership of land while trade and industry were in the hands of the private business class. The State got its wealth through taxation while the private sector made money through profit-making, People were generally engaged in agriculture cottage industries and other work that satisfied the basic needs of the community in which they lived. There were others who were employed in state services and in the industrial and business enterprises of the private sector.

Undoubtedly the majority of people would have lived a life outside this organized economy which latter day economists called a subsistence economy. A person like myself would venture to call

it more or less a self-sufficient and sustainable economy. Certainly there would have been exploitation and poverty in the midst of a generally no-poverty society.

Lord Buddha was a realist and a very practical Teacher. His Mission was not to formulate a model political or economic system. He took for granted the systems that existed during His time and analyzed and showed the flaws in those from a spiritual, moral and ethical point of view. Further He advised them on the correct way of doing things for the development of the personality of the individual human being and the society in general. Whenever he was asked or came across situations where His observations on economic and political matters helped people to improve themselves materially as well as spiritually He never hesitated to guide them on the correct path. Both kings and nobles, setthis and commoners benefited from His teachings.

Buddhism accepts freedom from want. For this economic activities are necessary . Even for monks (*Bhikkhus*) and nuns (*Bhikkhunis*) who have renounced house-hold life in search of spiritual pursuits, robes or clothing (*civara*) food (*pindapatha*), shelter (*senasana*) and medicine (*gilanapacca*) are necessary. Both monks and nuns, and laymen and women, need a conducive environment to live (*patirupa desa vasa*). Even in the most primitive societies human beings cannot survive without these basic needs. Buddha appreciated and understood these needs and clearly taught them how to earn their livelihood justly (*anavajjani kammani*), and how to utilize their earnings for the benefit of oneself and others. As societies developed and production of commodities and services increased then to this portfolio of basic human needs several others were added such as energy requirements, communication, education and cultural needs. As human civilizations advanced more and more in the fields of science and technology certain secondary and tertiary needs were required to be satisfied. Need-based economies were slowly transformed into want-based economies and then, as the modern times approached, especially after the industrial revolution and colonialism, we witnessed how a greed-based economy came into being and expanded in geometrical progression. This has brought about a devastating impact on

human society and environment and as we reach the Third Millennium (of the Christian Era) we witness that we are now ready to make a quantum jump into total oblivion. We are examining 'Buddhist Economics' at a critical time like this.

Buddhism, Class and Wealth

Lord Buddha did not preach class antagonism.On the other hand He clearly taught that the greatness of an individual did not depend on his wealth but on his character. The question is not whether an individual is rich or poor but whether he is good or bad, virtuous or sinful. It is one's actions - *Kamma* - that qualitatively determine the greatness of a person. If one earns wealth by sinful and wrong means such a person does lot of harm to himself and others. True happiness will evade him. Similarly one should spend what one has earned wisely.

Buddha was not against earning wealth the right way, by Right Livelihood (*Samma Ajiwa*). In fact this is one of the eight steps in the Noble Eight-fold Path. He went on to advise how best to earn wealth. He mentioned vigorous effort and great enthusiasm as essential qualities to be developed by those who want to acquire wealth. The idle can never be rich. Wealth has to be earned by lawful and just means. One who does not strive and remains poor through idleness and lack of enthusiasm is compared by the Buddha to a person blind in both eyes (*Andha*). One who becomes rich by wrong means (*Micca Ajiwa*) is like a person having one eye (*eka cakku*). One who has become rich by good means is compared to a man with both eyes (*dvi cakku*).

In the Samyutta Nikaya it is observed that wealth can be earned by three means. (1) Unlawfully and by violence, (2) Unlawfully and lawfully by violence and non- violence, (3) Lawfully and without violence. The third way is advocated as the best to be followed by the wise and those who pursue true happiness. Similarly, a successful businessman will have to develop (1) Skill in buying and selling, (2) A sense of net profit, (3) Ready sources of capital, (4) A service geared to the satisfaction of consumers and (5) diligent work discipline.

In the Vyaggapajja Sutta Buddha advises householders to keep in mind and practice four principles that lead to happiness on earth. Advising Dighajanu who raised the question of householders' happiness on earth Buddha says: (1) Cultivate skills, be efficient, earnest and devoted to your profession (*Utthanasampada*), (2) Carefully protect what you have earned with your efforts righteously (*Arakkhasampada*), (3) Associate only with wise,virtuous and good friends (*Kalyanamittata*), and (4) Live a life of economic evenness and choose the right style of living (*Samajivikata*).

In Buddhist texts and related literature numerous instances can be found pertaining to making wealth in the right way. Then, what are the wrong ways of earning money? They are by taking away life, by thieving, by deception, by producing by producing and selling intoxicating substances and drugs, poisons and weapons that destroy human and animal life and property and trading in slaves. In Buddhist economics this kind of economic activity is totally unacceptable. However national and world economic statistics are compiled by giving monetary values to this kind of so called 'economic' deeds. Therefore, the GNPs and growth rates which include these are not a true measure of real economic progress of nations.

Buddha's greatest lay disciple was a setthi named Anathapindika. It was he who bought the land and constructed the famous Jetawana monastery at Savatthi. Anathapindika was a great banker too. Once describing what is happiness for a layman, Buddha mentioned four kinds of happiness to him. Firstly, when by righteous means wealth is acquired and owned by a person there is a great sense of economic security and self-esteem (*Atthi-sukha*); secondly, the feeling that he could spend that wealth as he wishes on himself, his family, his friends and relatives, his workers and on meritorious deeds (*Bhoga-sukha*), thirdly, to be free from debts (*anana-sukha*) and fourthly to live a life of purity in thought word and deed (*Anavajja-sukkha*). See how Buddha balances the first three, which are economic, with the last which is spiritual.

Buddha spelt out five spheres in which wealth should be spent, namely, for supporting oneself, the family and dependents; helping friends and associates; looking after one's own protection; making offerings to relatives, guests, departed ones,deities, paying state dues and taxes; and supporting the community of monks.

Buddha's Advice on Use of Wealth

A very popular piece of advice by the Buddha about the ways one should get about with earnings is found in the Sigalovada Sutta:

Spend one portion of the earnings for consumption purposes (*Ekene Bhoge Bhunjeyya*), Invest two portions in business or industry (*Dvihi kamman payojaye*),

Save one portion to be used if and when in distress (*Chatuntampi Nidapeyya, Apadasu Bhavissati*)

Buddha in his preachings gave the pride of place to women in managing the household economy. 'She knows the household work best and is capable. She can manage the servants well. She has pleasing ways towards the husband and she guards his wealth. In the Parabhava sutta, four ways of losing wealth are mentioned (*Apayamukhani*). These are Looseness with women (*Ittidutta*), debauchery (*Suradutta*), gambling (*Akkhadutta*), and evil friends (*Papamitta*). Again in the Sigalovada sutta, six ways of losing wealth and succumbing to suffering are explained. These are: (1) Addiction to intoxicants (2) Frequenting the streets at unseemly hours (3) Haunting fairs (4) Getting infatuated by gambling (5) Associating with evil companions and (6) Idle company. Six perils that entail each of these are described in detail.

The first results in loss of wealth, increase in quarrels, susceptibility to disease, loss of reputation and good character, indecent exposure and impaired intelligence. The second causes insecurity to him, his wife, children and property, creates suspicion of crimes, causes false rumours around him, and endless other troubles. The third is a restless mind thinking all the time where dancing, singing, music, recitation, merrymaking etc are going on. The fourth attracts hatred by winning, sadness by losing, wasted life, not trusted in a court of law, despised by officials and friends, not

considered to give or take in marriage. The fifth is taking as friends any gambler, libertine, tippler, swindler, cheat, or criminal. Sixth , the idler finds excuses not to work saying it is too early, too late, too cold, too hot, he is too hungry, too full etc and work remains undone, wealth is drained away while getting no income.

From these examples we see scattered throughout the teachings of the Buddha valuable principles relating to production, distribution and consumption of wealth and how it should be done and the right and wrong ways of using it. Underlying all these is the objective of the well-being of the individual person, the family, the community, the entire society and nature. Equal emphasis is given to material as well as spiritual well-being. Therefore the moral laws such as the Kammic Laws of Causality should govern all our activities including the economic.

Labour for Personality Awakening

In Buddhism, human labour is recognized as a fundamental source of wealth. But labour is much more than added monetary value to a natural resource. It transcends the employer-employee relations as far as remuneration is concerned. What is important is every human being engaged in righteous work. Physical work is as important as mental work in the awakening of human personality. Every person has the right to choose the work according to his feelings and abilities and develop his faculties. When working with other people in bringing about goods and services needed for the well-being of the community a person overcomes his egocentredness. Buddhism accepts division of labour and specialization but totally rejects the concept of judging a human being as high and low from the work he does. By birth one does not become a high caste or low caste, but by actions alone one becomes a brahmin or an outcaste. Buddha discarded the caste-oriented employment system. Organizing and training labour, looking into their age, sex, and physical fitness, their contentment, high morality, welfare, leave, medical care, reasonable wages and incentives; and motivation of labour are all mentioned in Buddhist teachings.

Inter-relatedness

Buddha's concern was for all beings, their relationships to one another and nature extending to the entire universal phenomena. Therefore, he laid down five Cosmic (Universal) Laws (*Niyama Dhammas*) that govern all other man-made laws and therefore should fall within them if human beings are to survive in this world and live in peace and happiness. They are the ones pertaining to the Genes (*Bija*), Seasons (*Utu*), Causal chain (*Kamma*), Phenomena (Dhamma) and Mind (*Citta).*

State Intervention is Necessary

There are three suttas, namely, the Cakkavattasihanda sutta, Kutadanta sutta and the Agganna sutta detailing economic and political processes that bring about peace and prosperity or conflict and disaster. They are very relevant even today. The entire economic structure can crumble and plunge a country into chaos and destruction if production decreases and there is maldistribution of goods and wealth. This is where State intervention is necessary and remedial action should be taken. A handful of persons are not allowed to hoard the wealth of a country. What is necessary is a holistic approach and not haphazard patchwork. Wealth should not be wasted on festivities and rural wealth should not be drained out to the cities for these festivities. Kutadanta sutta advocates a decentralised monetary system. Natural resources and national wealth should be preserved and methodical planning and constructive ventures should be implemented. In the same way that when economic changes took place in the form of private property and organized farming, cattle-breeding and industry, there were appropriate administrative and social developments like the election of a King, similarly required and appropriate political measures should be taken to cope with changes that occur in the economic field.

Spirituality at the Centre

One may acquire and use wealth in the right ways yet still be in danger of losing all this from fire, water, kings, robbers, enemies and heirs. Nothing is everlasting. Everything is subject to change. Therefore, Buddha cautions us: Decline follows the man who is proud of his wealth. Wisdom is better than Wealth (*Tamahi*

panna dhanena seyya -Majjima Nikaya). Supreme wealth is Happiness (*Santhutti paramam dhanam-Dhammapada*).

There is a wealth that is not subject to the above dangers and cannot be taken away by anybody else. These are: Wealth of Faith (*Saddhadhana*), Wealth of Virtue (*Siladhana)*, Wealth of Conscientiousness (*Hiridhana*), Wealth of Fear of Blame (*Ottappadhana*), Wealth of Listening (*Sutadhana*), Wealth of Beneficence (*Cagadhana*) and Wealth of Wisdom (*Pannadhana*).

So far I have dealt with some Buddhist textual material related to the subject of Economics. I have not tried so far to find out how far these are applicable to modern times. Neither have I attempted to compare these teachings with what generally goes as Economic 'Science' today. I put the word science in quote because I am not convinced as it is studied and applied today, that it is a science the way I look at science. Economics today has become increasingly dependent on quantifiable data. There is also over specialization to the neglect of realities which are obvious to our common sense. Most of the predictions of economists do not come to pass. They seem to be more interested in safeguarding their traditional theories and approaches and specialized fields rather than opening out their vista to see and understand the totality of our societies. From Buddhist perspective we always look at totality and plan our approaches to social and economic development. What follows is an outline of an alternative approach that the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement of Sri Lanka is trying.

Fulfilling Needs in a Buddhist Society

In order to begin to build a Buddhist Society its needs must be identified. This is the best way to build a Buddhist economic system which has the goal of creating a supreme wealth of happiness.

Recently I read a very interesting book by Mr. Shinichi Inoue a former President of Miyazaki Bank in Japan, titled "Putting Buddhism to Work - A New Approach to Management and Business." In Chapter 6 of this book, Buddhist Economics in Commerce and Industry, he says; "If we use the following formula to understand happiness, we can see the difference in the Western and Eastern approaches.

$$\text{Happiness} = \frac{\text{Wealth}}{\text{Desire}}$$

In the West, the general orientation has been to attain happiness by increasing wealth so that one gets *more* of what one desired. In contrast, Buddhism emphasizes the happiness that comes from being detached from desires, i.e. happiness is increased by *reducing* our desires."

In the Sarvodaya Village Development Programme the following Ten Basic Human Needs have been identified. The entire community is organized to satisfy these basic human needs with their own self-reliance and community participation. The following ten basic needs are applicable to the individual, the family and the village community as well.

1. A Clean and Beautiful Environment (Both physical and psychological)
2. A Clean and Adequate supply of Water
3. Simple Requirements of Clothing
4. Balanced Food Requirements
5. A Simple House to live in
6. Basic Health Care
7. Simple Communication Facilities
8. Minimum Energy requirements
9. Total Education
10. Cultural and Spiritual Needs

Without these minimum requirements being fulfilled it is difficult for a householder to devote time wholeheartedly for spiritual development. According to different times and climes, and other factors, these Ten Basic Human Needs, when subdivided into sub-needs may take different forms. There can be as many as 180 sub-needs. For example in a cold climate the clothing or housing requirements may be quite different from that of a tropical place. In Sarvodaya work, members of communities have decided upon sometimes from 15 to 20 sub-needs under each basic human need. The rationale behind the analysis of these basic human needs is the status of the weakest population group in a community and the objective of improving their level of living.

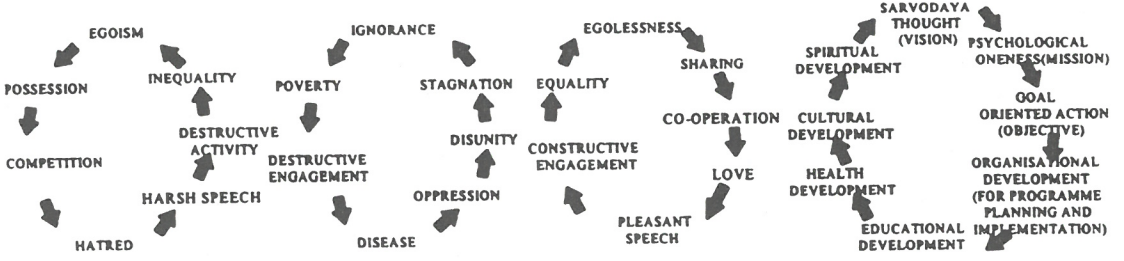
Full Engagement

Employment is not considered by Sarvodaya as a basic human need. Employment brings income for a person, which is used to buy what is required to satisfy the needs. So, employment and income are means of satisfying needs and are not needs by themselves.

Thus in Sarvodaya, 'income' and 'employment' are not central and have only a limited relevance, especially during the initial stages. The aim of production in a village economy is not to accumulate profit but to satisfy the needs of the local community. The criterion Sarvodaya uses is not a speculative exchange value in an unknown market. It is a real use value in their own households.

On the other hand Sarvodaya gives great importance to the engagement of every member of the community in processes related to their basic need satisfaction. Sarvodaya activities at community level provide for such engagement for all age groups. This provides them with an opportunity to be industrious, to cooperate for common benefit, learn skills and understand problems and exercise their minds to seek solutions.

PATH TO VILLAGE RE -AWAKENING
GRAMODAYA



DECADENT VILLAGE | THERE IS A CAUSE | THERE IS A HOPE | THERE IS A WAY

Reversing the Vicious Cycle

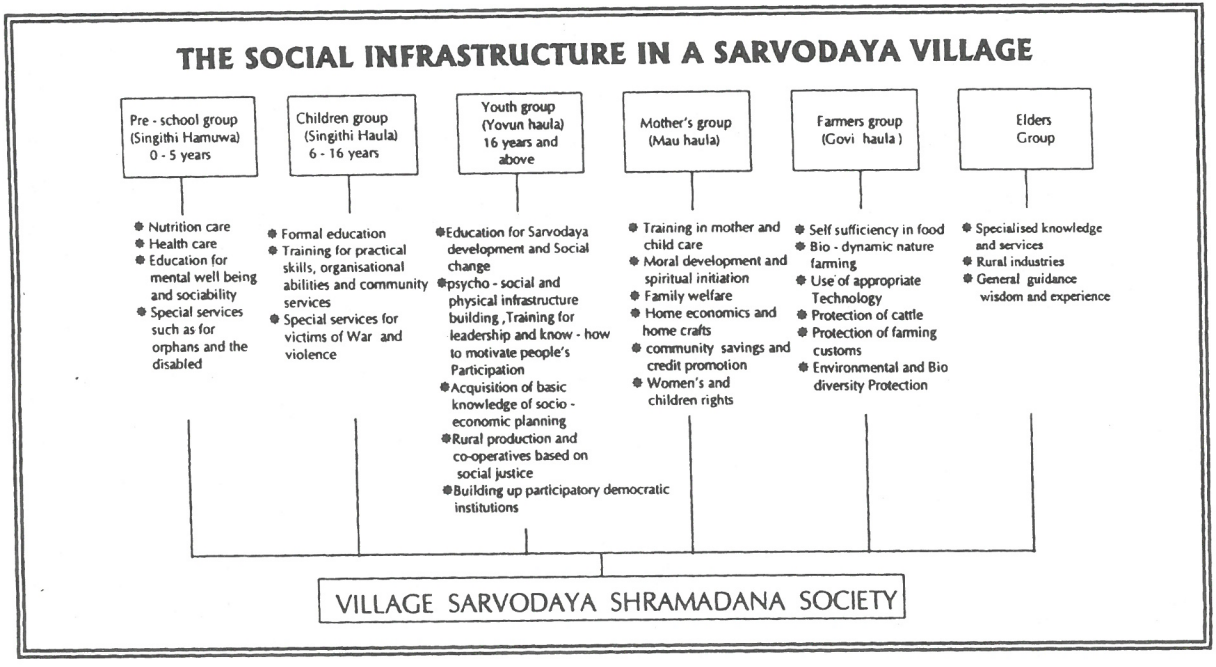
Poverty does not exist in isolation. Related to poverty, also ignorance, disease, stagnation, oppression and so on all co-exist. It is vicious cycle. What causes this vicious cycle are a number of inter-related factors. If we are to break this vicious cycle a Cycle of Hope has to be released. This has to be followed by a practical Way. This was of analysis is modelled after Buddha's Four Noble Truths: There is Suffering (*Dukkha*). There is a Cause to this Suffering (*Samudaya*). This Cause can be Removed (*Nirodha*) and There is Way (Magga) of doing this. Graphically this model can be shown on previous page.

If the causes of decadence start with egoism, possession, competition and so on then to release their opposite forces of non-egoism, non-possession, co-operation and so on correct conditions have to be created for people to participate and work. This is exactly what a Shramadana camp does and it was briefly described earlier. This type of participation brings about hope in the form of egolessness, equality, constructive engagement, pleasant speech and so on opening a new Path to Awaken.

The Path has many inter-related and inter-dependent components such as a Vision as expressed by the Sarvodaya Philosophy, a Mission to which people are psychologically bound and are dedicated, Goals and Objectives determining various actions, and Organisational forms facilitating planning, implementation, management and so on. All these are directed to bring about an awakening in the fields of the Educational, Health, Cultural, Moral and Spiritual life of people.

Psycho -Social Infrastructure Building

The optimum number of families in a village community, that Sarvodaya finds easiest to organise, is between 100 to 150. It is best that villages where there are more than 200 families are organised into two or more sub villages or 'Gamgodas' Through Shramadana camps initial psycho-social infra-structure building is progressively achieved by the village communities. Villagers themselves select one or more of their felt-needs and with their own self- reliance and community participation these needs are satisfied.


THE SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE IN A SARVODAYA VILLAGE
Pre - school group (Singithi Hamuwa) 0 - 5 years
Children group (Singithi Haula) 6 - 16 years
Youth group (Yovun haula) 16 years and above
Mother's group (Mau haula)
Farmers group (Govi haula)
Elders Group
Nutrition care
Health care
Education for mental well being and sociability
Special services such as for orphans and the disabled
Formal education
Training for practical skills, organisational abilities and community services
Special services for victims of War and violence
Education for Sarvodaya development and Social change
psycho - social and physical infrastructure building , Training for leadership and know - how to motivate people's Participation
Acquisition of basic knowledge of socio - economic planning
Rural production and co-operatives based on social justice
Building up participatory democratic institutions
Training in mother and child care
Moral development and spiritual initiation
Family welfare
Home economics and home crafts
community savings and credit promotion
Women's and children rights
Self sufficiency in food
Bio - dynamic nature farming
Use of appropriate Technology
Protection of cattle
Protection of farming customs
Environmental and Bio diversity Protection
Specialised knowledge and services
Rural industries
General guidance wisdom and experience
VILLAGE SARVODAYA SHRAMADANA SOCIETY

To begin with, the social (organizational) infrastructure in a village consists of various formations such as the pre-school age children, compulsary school-going age children, out of school youth between the ages 16-26, mothers, adults, farmers and so on. Each formation is related to certain activities which fall within the agenda of basic human needs. This is a stage in village development wherein leadership skills get developed, community leadership potential is discovered, training in vocational skills is given and in general the problems are identified and solutions are sought by the people themselves.

The Social Infrastructure in a Village can be graphically shown on previous page.

Legislation

The various social formations in a village really come of age when the village as a whole is ready to be registered as an incorporated body under the accepted governmental laws. Such a legal entity is called Village Sarvodaya Shramadana Society. It is this organization from then onwards that plays the leading role of awakening the village in all aspects, namely social, economic and political, as well as spiritual, moral and cultural.

It takes time to establish a Village Sarvodaya Shramadana Society. Through practical experience it is found that a village passes through the following stages.

Stage I: Sarvodaya Shramadana Camps in which both villagers from the village itself and other Sarvodaya volunteers from neighbouring villages participate to provide the village with essential services as roads, latrines, wells, tank bunds, irrigation canals, reforestation programmes etc, with the emphasis on mutual benefit to the community.

Stage 2: Formation of peer groups such as mothers' groups, children's groups, youth groups, farmers' groups and so on and provision of training for them in leadership on child-care, health and sanitation etc so that they can effectively participate in basic needs satisfaction programmes.

Stage 3: Through self- reliance and community participation, satisfaction of basic needs in the village and the formation of a village level Sarvodaya Shramadana Society registered under government regulations capable of giving organized leadership to all village level activities that lead to the improvement of their standard of living.

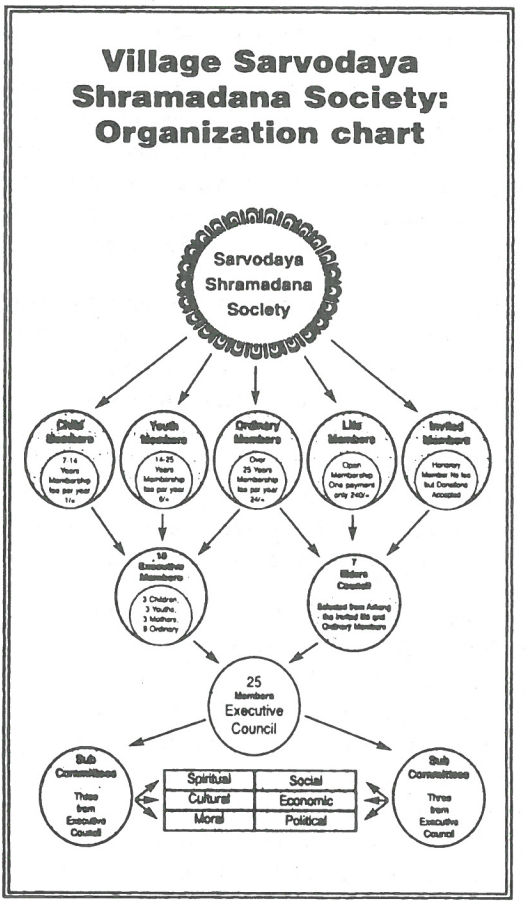
Stage 4: Introduction of Sarvodaya Economic Enterprises Development Services to the village and progressively developing the capacity of the villagers to save, to borrow, to improve the existing enterprises, to start new ones, to repay the loans and evolve their own village development bank.

Stage 5: Building economic relationships with the neighbouring villages, strengthening the capacity in money, products and services so that the latter too could become apart of a cluster of villages along with other clusters of villages in the country contributing to the building of an alternative approach to economic development where the rural areas are benefited.

All Village Sarvodaya Shramadana Societies are governed by a set of rules which the members accept and ratify at the inaugural General Meeting itself. These rules were formulated by competent lawyers subject to the prevailing Constitution of Sri Lanka and other laws of the country. These societies when recognized registered by the Registrar of Societies/Companies have full autonomy to operate as independent legal entities. Today nearly 3000 village societies out of the 11,600, villages where Sarvodaya is active have their own registered societies. Others will soon follow.

Their General Principles (Rule 7) are similar to those of the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement of Sri Lanka which is the principal national Sarvodaya body incorporated by an Act of Parliament (No. 12 of 1972). However the General Objects (Rule 6) cover not only all matters pertaining to basic need satisfaction and village development but also those sectors pertaining to coordination with local and central government services, other voluntary and private bodies, industrial, trade and financial matters, but also using even foreign markets to the advantage of rural communities.

In the kind of participatory approach to development that Sarvodaya practises, many processes converge on the realization of personal and social awakening Changes in the thinking of people and their attitudes; innovation of methods, techniques and technologies in the execution of basic human needs satisfaction programmes; and evolution and institutionalization of appropriate structures within democratic control of basic communities, are three such sectors that converge harmoniously in this self-development exercise of the people.



Towards a Buddhist Economics

Sarvodaya is not a growth-oriented development as far as growth is dependent on non-renewable resources. Yet economic growth is essential and it has to take place with due acceptance of the rights of all forms of life to the resources of the planet, promoting equal and non-exploitative relationships between human beings and recognizing interdependence between human beings, the society and nature. This is not an easy task. But the Five-Stage development process that Sarvodaya practises facilitate what may even be called Sustainable Development.

You may realize from whatever I have described so far that the Sarvodaya approach to development based on Buddhist Philosophy is a very pragmatic one starting with what people know they need, and trying to satisfy those with what they have both in respect of material resources and know-how. Whatever outside help that comes supplements their own efforts. This approach is different from both the western capitalist economics and Marxist economics. Sarvodaya not only recognizes that people have basic material needs that have to be satisfied to overcome poverty but also that the methods applied in implementing the poverty eradication programmes should also not violate the norms that are held in high esteem by the people. The ethical values and right conduct are necessary to satisfy their spiritual aspirations. The methodology that Sarvodaya has developed over a period of four decades is, in fact, an attempt to bring about a balance between these two conflicting approaches.

The prevalent economic theories of both the western and Marxist brands are well developed, documented and have been practised over a long period of time. An approach like that of Sarvodaya has a long way to go before it can build up a clear economic theory and practice which one may call Buddhist Economics. Even building up a distinct terminology to clearly express what we mean and make it intelligible to others is a time-consuming task. So we have to use the existing economic language and even the current divisions such as micro economics, macro-economics and also specialized subjects like public finance in our work. We also have to operate and do our work within the existing laws of the country and the administrative and financial frame-

works. When it comes to statistical computations and measures we are at a great disadvantage when compared with those of the traditional current econometricians as our tools have yet to be developed. In spite of these constraints the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement is striving to build a working model. What was described so far is the foundation of such a model.

For example Sarvodaya does not consider the classical factors of production such as Land, Labour, Capital and Entreprenurship as those that have to be used merely to create wealth. We look at these and other related resources as important for the survival, sustainability and well-being of not only our generation but also future generations and the other living beings and nature itself. Therefore. when Sarvodaya gets into economic activities, issues such as profit, speculation, hoarding, competitiveness, shares and stock markets and so on become of secondary importance. The main concern is satisfaction of basic needs, secondary needs and tertiary needs, in that order, through Right Livelihood in a Full-Engagement society.

The concerns of governments, private sector bodies and international political and economic institutions are different. They are guided by concepts of globalization, market economies, full-employment, sustainable growth and so on. However, these are the leading forces in societies and even a movement for radical non-violent social change such as Sarvodaya has to act within the limitations imposed by them. It is in this context that we have to devise ways and means, innovate methods and technologies, and build new institutions to co-exist with them without getting co-opted, to carry on with our programmes.

Sarvodaya Early Childhood Development Programme, Sarvodaya Women's Movement, Sarvodaya Legal Services Movement, Sarvodaya Peace Brigades Movement, Sarvodaya Rural Technical Services, Sarvodaya Economic Enterprises Development Services, Sarvodaya Community Health Services, Sarvodaya Bio-diversity and Environmental Conservation Programme and Sarvodaya Suwa Setha Services Society are such innovative institutions and programmes all of which merge together at the level of the village to build the alternative society. The village movement itself which has now 11,600 villages at dif-

ferent stages of the five-stage development scheme is aimed at Gram Swarajya or village self-government.

Each village strives to satisfy its basic needs. Then a cluster of ten villages come together to satisfy their secondary needs. Then several clusters at divisional, district and national levels strive to influence the local, provincial and central governments in policies and decisions that would ultimately satisfy their secondary and tertiary needs. So the task of Sarvodaya is two-fold. It has to go on with its poverty eradication programmes on one hand and on the other hand develop a conceptual as well as a methodical- institutional framework in the light of practical experience. This entails an educational programme aimed not only at the village communities but also at those who wield political and administrative powers at divisional, district, provincial and national levels. Establishment of correct rapport with persons and institutions at all these levels has to be done at all times.

Towards a Buddhist Society

As one may understand, and is being proven by the Sarvodaya experience, there is a possibility of bringing about social and economic development on the principles of Buddhism. A Buddhist approach to development therefore:

1. -is based on self- reliance and community participation at all stages
2. -is always founded on ethical principles and not purely on maximization of profit and endless growth bringing about environmental pollution, ecological imbalances, indebtedness, vast disparities in income and promoting an affluent life style for a few;
3. -generates internal dynamism within communities and countries while external support, if received, is only to promote that dynamism
4. -starts with what they have and what they know and not with what they do not have and do not know
5. -utilizes the principle of using one portion of one's income for consumption, investing two portions and saving one portion for an emergency situation advocated by the Buddha which is

an excellent principle to be followed by communities and countries

6. -enables women to play a leading role in the fields of savings and credit, food production and storage, education and social welfare, and they are always given equal status;
7. -encourages people's participatory development which in its essence is an exercise in participatory democracy enabling people to manage their own affairs
8. -provides plenty of room for private initiative while compatible co-operative systems are developed not only within communities but even with clusters of communities
9. -bases technological advancements on local technologies which are under the control of the people
10. -works toward total devolution and decentralization of political and economic power to local communities so that imposition of oppressive systems of governance, economic exploitation and imposition of dominant cultures on people are minimized.

Today, as we switch over to the 21st century we are in a position to do this globally better than at any other time in known history because of the high advancement in the field of communication technology. We no longer need centralization of power in any sector of human development.

Lord Buddha rejected ideologies that condition the minds of people, divide them into various factions and which at the end result in conflicts within nations and between nations. He advocated a Vision based on compassion for all (*Metta*). A myriad of ideologies have brought about ethnic violence not only in poor countries but also in economically developed countries. The recent nuclear tests in India and Pakistan are examples of even poor countries trying to depend more on destructive physical power rather than the power of Dharma or Righteousness. Emperor Asoka abandoned violence after the Kalinga war and launched what was known as Dharma Vijaya, that is winning the hearts of people in neighbouring countries purely through a vision based on his conviction "All humans are my children" (*Save Munise Paja Mama*). He not only achieved national unity of the Indian sub continent but sent special envoys called "*Dharmamahamathras*" to spread the

Dharma Vijaya principles to far off countries such as Syria, Egypt, Epires, Palestine, Macedonia, Cyrene and Alexandria. He also sent missions headed by enlightened monks to all neighbouring countries such as Burma, Siam and Sri Lanka. It is recorded in *Mahavansa* that for the foundation-laying ceremony of Ruwanveliseya in Anuradhapura thousands of Arahats from even modern Iran and Iraq attended the celebrations. As peace prevailed in those times civilizations flourished and very high levels in the fields of Art and Architecture, irrigation and water management, agriculture and, fine arts and crafts were reached.

If the world follows Buddha's teachings of rejecting ideologies and accepting the vision of working for the well-being and awakening of all, there lies the way to peace and happiness. Before coming to a conclusion, I must emphasize one fact: that in Buddhist approach to development no other religion or belief is left out or discriminated against. In Rock Edict XII of Dharmashoka he emphasized religious unity and advocated that teachers of other religions also should be venerated. "Other Sects had to be duly honoured in every case. If one is acting thus he is promoting his own Sect and benefiting others." He also said "Concord indeed is commendable." (*Samavayo eva sadhu*). We in Sri Lanka, Siam, Burma, and other Buddhist country should set an example to the world by following a Buddhist approach to social and economic development to make of Buddha's vision, a reality in the 21st century.

Presented to the 6th International Conference of the Society for Buddhist - Christian Studies, Pacific Lutheran University, Takoma, Washington, U.S.A. August 5th - 12th, 2000.

GLOBALISATION AND PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATORY DEVELOPMENT

I wish to thank the organizers of ASEM 2000 for inviting me to Seoul to participate at this Conference as a keynote speaker for the thematic group of Religions. I must specially thank sister Jenny Jihyun Park for using her persuasive power to get me down here away from my busy schedule of work back at home and abroad. I come from the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement of Sri Lanka of which I am the President. Sarvodaya means the Awakening of All. This Movement was founded 42 years ago to translate the teachings of the Buddha into the fields of development, justice and peace without any sectarian considerations. Sarvodaya is an Interfaith Organization. People' participation is the main thrust of this movement.

Whatever problems and issues we discuss it is important that we keep in mind the centrality of the human being. Scientific facts, technology and modern terminology we use such as globalization, bio-technology and genetic engineering should not be allowed to take our minds away from the human being. In the same way that natural processes of our heartbeat and breathing in and out are central to sustain our body and mind. It is the human personality that finally decides whether we can survive on this planet or not.

Today the Sarvodaya Movement is working in 15,000 villages of Sri Lanka which is more than half the number of village communities in the country. I will try to examine what objectives we had in mind when we started the Sarvodaya Village Awakening Movement, how we progressively attempted to reach these objectives and how the influence of globalization positively or negatively influenced our work.

Sarvodaya started its work in a culture very rich in values. For example sharing, pleasant language, constructive activities and equality in association were the four traditional principles of group conduct on which we based our work to unite the community, identify their needs and set priorities for the satisfaction of these basic needs.

Self-reliance, community participation and sharing labour and other resources were the principal assets we had. The main objective was to build a no poverty - no affluence society from where the community can further improve their physical and spiritual quality of life. In our work we succeeded to bring about unity in the community, inter communal harmony, inter religious harmony and fraternal feelings among diverse people.

Environmental renewal and enrichment, preservation and enhancement of available perennial water resources, ensuring the satisfaction of the need for simple clothing, provision of shelter and health care, reverting back to sustainable forms of agriculture without polluting the soil with chemical fertilizers and pesticides, introduction of new appropriate technologies such as the use of natural fertilizers and EM technology, provision of communication facilities, organizing educational, health and nutritional programmes for the pre school children as well as children of school going age, bringing youth and women to the forefront to take responsibilities as community organizers , office bearers of village societies, managers of village development banks and so on, were positive results we could achieve in thousands of village communities during the last forty two years of our work..

Unlike a capitalist economy which primarily helps those who have money to make more money, the Sarvodaya approach is to organize all available resources in the village without destroying the ecological balance or the environmental health and gear the production processes to meet the basic needs of all people. In this kind of economy the principal actors as well as the beneficiaries are the people themselves. Small and medium sized enterprises which are visible and accountable to the people function. In this case the markets can function in a fair and balanced way advancing the interest of the people as a whole. Sarvodaya does not believe in centralized planning either, as was tried in communist economies. We put our faith in visible, decentralized and people's participatory economies which only can sustain our human values, advance our spiritual being and save our environment for future generations.

With the newly introduced economic globalization not only people but also governments lose the power to control and regularize the economies of their countries. They all have to depend on the centralized decisions taken by centres of money power located in

the invisible unapproachable places in the capitals of affluent countries. The Chief Executive Officers of the multinational corporations who have their own networks are only responsible to their shareholders to give more and more profit for their investments. Even in America I do not think that even ten percent of these shares are owned by the average American citizens. A very small percentage of the richest in the world benefits from the world resources, human labour and scientific and technological advances. This is a very dangerous global trend which has to be handled very wisely by governments, people and the international community.

All Sarvodaya work has a spiritual and moral content with diverse cultures working in unity and harmony thus ensuring a peaceful psychological and social environment. But the increasing effects of globalization are adversely affecting our work in all these communities. We were always thinking globally although acting locally. "May all sentient beings be well and happy," "May we go from village to village and be of help to all," and "Let us heal our mind, heal our society and heal our earth" were the slogans with which we are going about with our work.

When we work in this spirit we hardly create waste. We will not allow greed to take over our emphasis on needs. Needs may be basic needs, secondary or tertiary needs. We believe that we can satisfy all these needs from the community upwards as we progress in our self reliant and participatory efforts. In other words human scale development with appropriate traditional and modern technologies and community based people's organizations were sufficient for us to eradicate poverty. Voluntary simplicity which is a principle we follow discouraged us from targeting an affluent life style which was not sustainable by the vast majority of people.

While we were following a human centered development process where the awakening of human personality, family personality and the community personality were uppermost in our minds, the official development policies of the government and inter governmental agencies and international financial institutions were following different policies. The relentless pursuit of economic growth that the governments followed undermined human values, family relationships and the inherent codes of ethics that prevailed in the community. Until recent times the damage done to the environment was hardly evaluated. Instead of sharing, acquisition of

more and more wealth was encouraged. Life support systems started breaking down. The value of living in contemporary society was defined in terms of money which encouraged people to follow a line of material self indulgence.

During the last four decades in my country to our disillusionment we saw mega institutions of the State and Corporations taking control over the lives and livelihood of people both in rural and urban communities. Through multimillion dollar advertisements people were brainwashed towards material gratification through greed and competition. Traditional spiritual goals in life that emphasized both need satisfaction and spiritual enlightenment were discouraged.

There is interconnectedness between everything in life and life-connected activities and institutions. In this context Lord Buddha's teachings on Paticca Samuppada or the theory of Dependent Arising comes to our mind. Greed invariably leads not only to competition but also to aversions and hatred. People's consciousness gets immersed in the illusion of "I and mine." Ignorance reigns supreme believing that this is the one and only life we have. There was no past. There is no future. Therefore the present moment has to be fully utilized to gratify the pleasures of the five senses. Steeped in this ignorance people lose sight of wisdom given by religions on re-birth, karma and karma- vipaka (actions and their effects). Roots of religious ethics and beliefs get uprooted.

While only a small section of the affluent and powerful people in society acquire the benefits of creation of wealth the gap between the rich and the poor widens. Suicides, homicides, robberies, abuse of children and women, destruction of ecological and environmental life support systems, social conflicts and even civil wars result as a consequence of this kind of economic globalization which in reality is a universally centralized economic planning by the few for the few at the cost of world's human and natural resources. In short severe economic dislocations, social instabilities and severe threats to nature are created. Globalization affects the entire global community. It is no longer a question of North and South. It is not even an issue pertaining only to the poor and the weak in society. This is a very serious issue that the entire global community including those Executives and big shareholders of

multinational corporations have to think very seriously. What is at risk is the future of the entire human species, the rest of the living world and survival of the planet itself for human habitation. The multi million dollar propaganda that reach our homes and promote the dream of a better life for all cannot cover up the stark reality which we experience everyday in the form of increasing poverty, worsening pollution, declining health of the earth and atmosphere and above all damaging the spiritual consciousness of human beings.

North South co-operation, women's issues, war and peace and other important subjects must be discussed in the context of this reality.

Thank You.

Summary of a speech delivered by Dr.A.T.Ariyaratne, the Founder and President of the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement of Sri Lanka to the ASEM People's Forum held in Seoul, Korea , on October 18th 2000.

HEALING THE WORLD WHILE DOCTORING THE PATIENT

I consider it a great privilege and an honour to have been invited to be the Chief Guest at the Annual Academic sessions of the Galle Medical Association. I would like to extend my humble thanks to the President, Dr. M.K.Raghunthan, the Council, and the Members of the Association for this very kind invitation.

Whenever I come to Galle where I was born and bred and, also had my secondary education, nostalgic memories of my childhood and youth come to my mind. Like most students at that time my choice was to pursue the medical profession. I cannot say whether I was motivated by humanitarian considerations or by other factors like the social and economic status enjoyed by doctors and the dignity of the profession at that time. Whatever it may be as I did extremely well in my studies at Mahinda College, Galle, becoming the first in the class almost at every term end and year end examinations culminating with a First Class and an exemption from Matriculation Certificate at the S.S.C. Examination I hadn't the slightest doubt that I would not be entering the Medical Profession.

However, my higher studies were abruptly interrupted half-way during the University Entrance Examination when sudden illness and economic hardships at home came my way. But I never gave up hope. From then onwards I had to struggle my way through as a Science Teacher at Buona Vista, a Science Trained and an Arts Graduate Teacher at Nalanda College, Colombo. Right through this period, from my student days up to now no obstacle could deter me from the process of self-learning by trying to get to the root causes of suffering in our society and doing something constructive to change the situation. The Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement of Sri Lanka is one of the outcomes of my endeavour, for the success of which numerous people contributed.

Even though I could not achieve my first ambition I feel extremely happy when I see my contemporaries at Mahinda, my students at Nalanda and even my children and their spouses

adorning your noble profession. My devotion to serve the living world, foremost among them the humanity, brought me face to face with a lot of the noble teachers of humanity both in my country and in many other countries of the world during the last five decades. Lord Buddha said that Contentment is the Supreme Wealth. So, I was content with the reality of my life at any particular time or at any particular clime and sought to maintain the joy of living through service. It was no longer my ambitions but a vision that drove me into compassionate actions or Karuna.

So I can say with some boldness and confidence that you are listening to a kind of healer, a healer though not in the sense of a physician or a surgeon or a practitioner of any branch of medical sciences. For nearly five decades I have been searching, researching and devoting myself to contribute my humble services to heal our planet, to remove suffering from human society and combat intolerance and violence we see around us. These are very lofty ideals extremely difficult to be achieved even by the world political leaders like the G-7 Heads of States. However we should not forget the fact that we have no alternative ways to survive unless we save the earth, feed and heal all its people and banish violence and war from our midst. Every human being has a potential to contribute to this cause.

All human problems can be traced to causes that spring from the human mind. When the mind is sick it extends to the body, the family and the society, the environment and into the planet as a whole. Therefore, I always say like a manthra, "Let us heal our mind and body, heal our society and heal our environment." In Mahatma Gandhi's words "the real key to health lies in the conservation of vital energy. Only that man can be said to be really healthy who has a sound mind in a sound body. The relation between the body and the mind is so intimate that, if either of them got out of order the whole system would suffer." The high rate of suicides and homicides, and alcoholism and drug addiction, which have assumed gigantic proportions in our country remind us the importance of healing the mind.

Whenever I go to a government hospital, private clinic or even an Ayurvedic practitioner I wonder how our country can ever deal with the large numbers of patients who flock to these places. I also observe how the doctors, nurses, technical staff, attendants, and other supporting staff work. In most of their faces

and in their conduct I can see a lot of stress and sometimes intolerance and lack of even basic civility. This saddens me a lot but I cannot blame them.

Two incidents which I experienced recently come to my mind. I went to the Anti TB Institute with my eldest daughter who is a senior lecturer in the Colombo University and whose husband is a specialist doctor. Everybody treated us very kindly, we collected the report and were returning along the passage where others were waiting to collect their reports and see the doctor. Suddenly we heard a female attendant shouting in Sinhala at a very poor looking woman while handing over the report to her: " You need not see the doctor. You have T.B. Cover your mouth. Go home and send all people at home to get tested for T.B. You go to the Welisara hospital " and so on. The poor excited woman was shivering and tears were falling from her eyes. If there was anything left in her immune system that too would have been destroyed by the admonition she received from the attendant.

My second daughter too had a similar experience at a private clinic when the doctor having had a casual glance at her skin condition said "You have got Chicken Pox. I might also catch it. Wait outside until I write the prescription." She told him that she has had a severe attack of Chicken Pox a few years back, but he insisted that it was a second attack of Chicken Pox. He wrote a prescription and gave it to her without looking at her. When she tried to talk again still looking down he asked her to go and take that medicine without asking questions. The doctor did not know that the patient herself had an M.Sc in Biology. He is an excellent physician but even he would have been in stress at that time, I told my daughter. These two incidents happened within two weeks.

We are living in a world where the people both educated and less educated are in a large measure living in a stressful state. That is why the three fold approach to heal the earth, overcome poverty and combat violence in an integrated way became more or less a passion in my life. I strongly believe that every human being should contribute to heal one's own body and mind while contributing to the healing process of other human beings, the environment and the society as a whole. It is an accepted scientific fact that all organisms possess mechanisms of self-repair to

counteract the forces that create illness, injury and imbalances. This may be true for the human beings as well as other living organisms on this planet.

We do not have to go very far to say that our doctors are capable of dealing with the subject of stresses and strains and mental illnesses. The contribution that our own Dr D.J.V. Harischandra has made by writing a book on Jataka Stories already winning international acclaim is sufficient proof. We have only to go back to our meditation practices and understand the unique and original contribution made by the Buddha to philosophy in the form of his teachings on Dependent Co-Arising or Paticca Samuppada. Maha Satipattana Sutra has become almost a text book in most American Universities. So, history of dealing with mind and body in their interrelationship goes back to the time of the Buddha.

When I talk to the Doctors, therefore, while I am totally ignorant of treating processes according to materialistic medical sciences and technologies, while in no way undermining them, I am convinced that the less visible natural healing systems should also be studied, understood and encouraged while we practice visible systems by clinical medicine. In other words every doctor should also be a healer in the full sense of the word if we are to put right most things that have gone wrong in human life and society.

At this point I like to draw your attention to some of the initiatives that have already been taken globally to work on these themes. Personally, as well as a member of the Sarvodaya Movement of Sri Lanka I am associated with some of these initiatives and these are been implemented to the best of our ability in nearly 15,000 village communities of this country.

First let me refer to the Earth Charter. I too was a Member of the Earth Charter Commission. Now this Commission has finalized its report and it is available on Earth Charter Website http://www.earthcharter.org. I think all professional associations like yours, universities and other educational institutes should make the knowledge available in this document accessible to all those who come under their charge. The principles that have been set out in this Charter are under broad headings of :

(i) Respect and Care for the Community and Life

(ii) Ecological Integrity
(iii) Social and Economic Justice
(iv) Democracy, Non-violence and Peace

Even in Medical Education syllabuses and curricula, I think, this subject should be given high importance. Such a measure will contribute very much for preventive health care besides other benefits to the community. The three sectors I referred to earlier are included in any actions planned based on these Principles of the Earth Charter.

Let me give another example. This is the application of (EM) Effective Micro-organisms in the fields of agricultural, environmental and medical problems. For about six years now we have tried EM Technology in the agricultural and environmental sectors of rural communities. Several farmers in several hundreds of villages have given up the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides replacing them with EM solutions which they themselves can prepare. For an acre of paddy land, for example, they have to spend only Rs. 100/- per acre compared to between three to four thousand rupees for chemical fertilizers. As we do not import anything in the manufacture of EM the price of Rs. 100/- per litre does not change. While chemical fertilizers not only cause health problems, their prices also increase every year. EM was invented in the University of Okinawa, Japan in early 1980s. Since then it has been extended to over 80 countries including Japan, USA, Netherlands, Thailand and Brazil.

The founder of EM Technology, Professor Teruo Higa of Japan developed this so that EM becomes a technology that must be the common property of people everywhere and not another profit making business of corporations. Over a 1000 communities in Japan now practice EM Kitchen Garbage Recycling methods. Citizens and Governments working together have dramatically brought down the contamination levels for waste water. EM plays a major role in restoring the environment and saving the earth. Even what they call ideal rice cultivation without tilling and weeding, but direct planting has also been successfully tried.

In EM Technology, what is called EM-X , is being tried out on all kinds of diseases, mostly on those such as AIDS and certain Cancers that are presently found to be incurable . There are more and more medical personnel joining this effort and doing lot

of research and exchanging their findings. They call themselves EM Medical Society. Slow but steady progress is being achieved in laying the groundwork that will make this a reality.

In Professor Higa's words:

"We know that at the very end of the 20th century we are in a situation where even the cutting edge of existing medical technology seems incapable of containing or gaining the upper hand against atrocious diseases like Cancer or AIDS for which no definitive form of truly effective treatment has yet been discovered. Yet, there is a certain section in the medical fraternity who think that EM may possibly hold a ray of hope against such intractable diseases".

EM is the abbreviation for Effective Micro-organisms. The word effective was coined by Professor Higa because those types of micro-organisms affect the world of nature in a positive manner. As there may be tens to several hundred millions of micro-organisms in one gram of soil the concept of EM in terms of microbiology goes beyond accepted strictures of definitive specialized research and investigations in this field.

However, just as in the case of discovery of Penicillin, by Dr.Alexander Fleming, with the assistance of a Sri Lankan, Mr D.C. Katugampola, who was his Research Assistant,, was an accidental discovery so was Dr Higa's interaction in the field of micro-organisms in the garden outside his laboratory where he had accidentally thrown some left over cultures. His vision of a natural world which he believed as capable of regeneration rather than degeneration led him to this discovery. Even the minutest micro-organism can move towards degeneration bringing about decomposition, pollution and contamination with all pests and other harmful insects appearing on the scene and bringing about total collapse and breakdown.

EM has been tested in Sri Lanka since 1994. It has been experimented at various Universities in Sri Lanka including the University of Peradeniya. Leading Sri Lankan scientists at various international forums have published research publications to validate its effectiveness. Sarvodaya has extended EM to over 3000 farmers in every region in Sri Lanka and observed healthy responses. The EM which Sarvodaya produces contains 100% Sri Lankan material. Already we are applying it for crop production, Floriculture, Tea Cultivation, Ornamental Fish Tanks, Animal husbandry, Sewage Treatment, Waste water treatment and composting.

Prof. Higa discovered effective micro-organisms with the ability to generate into antioxidants. He raised the antioxidant levels in the soils so that the toxins produced by harmful micro-organisms get eradicated. Then he hit on the idea of treating regenerative types of micro-organisms as a group. By chance it led to the creation of EM. Eighty different strains of effective organisms are brought together in EM. I am not going into details of this research. But suffice it to say that he has proved the potential of this technology to bring about a revolutionary transformation of our traditional thinking on agriculture, environment and diseases. The potential this technology has to eradicate poverty by empowering the poor is enormous.

When I was called to address the American National Health Association about 25 years ago almost intuitively I told the cream of the medical and health professionals who gathered there in New York that before the end of the 20th Century all of us should make an attempt to harmonize doctoring and healing or in other words try to bring about a sacred union between the traditional Greek god of Medicine and his daughter the goddess of Healing. I repeated the same idea in 1982 when I happened to be the first non medical person to be conferred an honorary doctorate after my convocation speech at the passing out of 600 doctors at the Amilio Aguinaldo College of Medicine in the Philippines.

Last month when I was in the United States meeting quite a number of academics in various fields I was pleasantly surprised about the advances they have made in trying to integrate the materialist medical sciences with non materialist healing processes. Most of us in society, particularly the poorer societies of the world seem to have entered the rat race where earning money and accumulation of wealth have become the central pursuit of their existence. Everyday the joy of living is getting further and further away from our lives as individuals, families and communities. Paradoxically those societies in rich countries seem to be going in the opposite direction. Though it is extremely difficult to reverse this trend they seem to be looking for an alternative. They seem to be asking the question "Your Money or Your Life? " On this subject of Your Money or Your Life, an international best seller has been written by the late Joe

Dominduez and Vicki Robin who founded the Voluntary Simplicity Movement. I had the good fortune to meet Vicki Robin last month in Seattle who explained to me how we can transform our relationship with money and achieve financial independence and become people who are actively engaged in leaving our planet in a better shape than we found it when we came.

Unfortunately we in Sri Lanka have lost our vision and therefore we do not know where we are going. We are in a state of siege. We are fighting a civil war in the North and East with most modern weaponry on either side. In the South all our resources are being wasted for party and power politics not only at election time but also in between elections. We have lost our sense of time. We no longer think of a past, a present and a future. We only think of the time before and after an election. Such a people have to go on degenerating in every department of life bringing about a degeneration of and destruction of life support systems themselves. This is the self-destructive pastime we are engaged in. You have to ask the question whether you are going to silently watch this total collapse or you are going to expand your field of service beyond doctoring to healing our society.

If you permit me I would like to place before you certain suggestions for your consideration pertaining to your field as well as going beyond that to embrace the total challenge to survive as a human species.

1. Please read, if you have already not done so, Dr Andrew Weils (M.D.) book on Spontaneous Healing, which deals with the subject-How to Discover and Enhance Your Body's Natural Ability to Maintain and Heal itself. This is a Borzoi Book published by Alfred A. Knowpf Inc. New York 1995. I am sure you will discover many practical and suitable steps we can take in this country to holistically tackle problems of physical and mental ill health and reduce the congestion in our medical and health centres and help people. Health and medical care have become an unbearable economic burden on our people and the State. We must change this situation.
2. Please read Professor Teruo Higa's two books - An Earth Saving Revolution I & II published by Sunmark Publishing Inc. Tokyo, Japan.

In conclusion I would like to refer to a global ailment even worse than deadly forms of cancers and AIDS. This is the conduct of corporations that rule the world. They have brought under their control almost every aspect of human life and everything connected with it not excluding your own profession. Their primary purpose is increasing corporate profits. They stand on our way to awaken our capacity for collective knowing and conscious action to successfully overcome our social, ecological and economic challenges. To get an idea of this subject which affect every human being I recommend you to read David Korten's two books "When Corporations Rule the World" and "The Post - Corporate World" published by the Kumarian Press, West Hartford, U.S.A.

As I was writing this lecture there was a news item where they say NASA has found a big hole in the Ozone layer over the Arctic which is as large as the United States of America. This is the direct result of using for industrialization purposes the immense knowledge acquired by men in science and technology without using it along with wisdom. Knowledge is needed and without it we cannot progress. But knowledge should give us wisdom. Only wisdom can give us a vision. It is the vision that ensures our survival or extinction on this planet.

I believe that I have given you some food for thought. I believe that those professions in the fields of health, medicine, education, economics and management should get themselves liberated from centralized political and corporate masters and the structures that give them power over our lives. They in turn should liberate our people to awaken themselves to liberate from the clutches of poverty, environmental degradation and violence to build a healthy human society and a peaceful environment to live. You have to Heal the World while you are Doctoring the Patient. That is the essence of the message I want give you this evening. I wish your academic sessions all success.

Thank you.

This is the summary of a talk given by Dr A T Ariyaratne, the Founder and President of the Sarvodaya Movement, to the Annual Academic Sessions of the Galle Medical Association, held at the auditorium of the Faculty of Medicine, Karapitiya, Galle on 22nd September, 2000.

APPLICATION OF GANDHIAN AND BUDDHIST PRINCIPLES OF NON-VIOLENCE TO COMBAT FANATICISM

I am extremely happy that once again I have been invited by Professor Doctor Johannes Lehanemann to participate in the 7th Forum of Nuremberg. I remember the former Nuremberg Consultations on religious education which I attended and I was intrigued by the efforts which were put in by experts in a variety of fields like Theology, Religion, Pedagogical Sciences and Humanities together with educators for the promotion of harmony between spiritual and ethical education.

In the 7th Nuremberg Forum you are concentrating on Spirituality and Ethical Education : Heritage and Challenge of Religions. The theme on which I have been asked to speak is the Application of Gandhian and Buddhist Principles of Non-violence to Counteract Fanaticism.

It is from an unstable state of mind that people take to extremist and non tolerant attitudes which lead to a lot of harm to themselves and others. This kind of instability of mind is brought about not due to one particular reason but a number of causes interacting on the human personality. The Gandhian and Buddhist approaches look at the totality of these causes and factors and try to bring about a transformation at the very root level.

Gandhiji's philosophy was to work for the well being of all, to awaken the potentiality of all people. Lord Buddha 2500 years before Gandhi taught us to extend our loving kindness towards the entire living world. There too, the approach was looking at humanity and nature as a whole with a universal perspective without getting ourselves trapped into all kinds of sectarian views based on our political, religious or cultural diversities.

"Fanatical excess is a thing always to be shunned. The middle path is the royal road.(Young India March, 21 1929.) It is good to die for religion, but for religious fanaticism one must neither live nor die. (Bapu-ke-Ashirvad Sept.13, 1948.) " These were the words of Mahatma Gandhi.

Lord Buddha attained Supreme Enlightenment under the Bodhi Tree in Bodhgaya. His first sermon was preached to the five ascetics who were practicing along with Him to discover the path to enlightenment. The latter were still struggling to discover the truth while ascetic Siddhartha left them for six years, practiced on his own, extreme forms of asceticism and realized that neither self-indulgence nor self-mortification would lead him to discover Truth. He took to the Middle Path and attained Supreme Enlightenment. He came back to the five ascetics and preached His first sermon to them. He declared that "He had discovered the Middle Position between eternalism and annihilationism .This Middle Position He called Dependent Arising . "Whatever a human being experiences has come to be dependent upon a large number of conditions. This is the principle of dependence:

This came to be because that existed. On the arising of this that arises. When this does not exist that does not come to be. On the cessation of this that ceases.

When He rejected the permanent and eternal self the Middle Position he discovered was Dependent Arising or what is called Paticca Samuppada.

When we discuss fanaticism it is important that we understand the Middle Position explained both by Mahatma Gandhi and more in detail and in depth by Lord Buddha. Fanaticism does not arise without a multiple of causes. When the causes are no more there, there will be no fanaticism. It is not even one cause; but several causes that lead to a certain condition such as the condition of fanaticism. This too combined with other causes like economic deprivation, political subjugation and religious or cultural intolerance can lead to frustration, violence and even terrorism. These in turn combined with other factors escalate into greater violence and instability in all aspects of life and society.

Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement of Sri Lanka from where I come attempts to follow this theory of Dependent Origination and the Middle Path that Lord Buddha taught us. This is also called the Noble Eight Fold Path. There is suffering, there is a cause to this suffering, the cause can be removed and there is a path we can follow to get over suffering. What is the Noble Eight Fold Path ? This is the path we are following in our everyday life and the work we are doing to alleviate and totally eradicate suffering in the human being and the human society.

Right Understanding, to get over ignorance, is the first step in our path. To understand that when a person is born to this world he has a body and consciousness. He has sense organs. Through these he goes into contact with the outside world. He experiences pleasant, unpleasant and neutral sensations because of his dispositions. While he gets attracted to the pleasant, rejects the unpleasant and is indifferent to the neutral, his desire for more and more does not get satisfied. When he cannot achieve his ever increasing desires, deprivation, frustration and suffering set in. Finally he embraces fanaticism leading to violence to himself and others.

This is the suffering brought about by ignorance. This is due to the ignorance of the fact that lasting satisfaction of desires can never be achieved. A wise person will always attempt to eliminate his craving. He will not attach himself to the false view of a permanent eternal self though he remains in the world. But he is not defiled by greed, aversion and ignorance. This is Right Understanding.

A person who is striving to understand the true nature of things will also develop Right Thoughts. He will not harbour thoughts of ill will or harm to others. He will always develop thoughts of compassion, goodwill and benevolence towards the rest of the living world. Such a person who strives to develop Right Understanding and Right Thoughts will follow that with Right Words and Right Action. Instead of taking away life of sentient beings he will try to help them to live. Instead of taking what does not belong to him or thieving directly or indirectly he will be beneficent towards others and help them to have their basic needs satisfied.

He will abstain from sexual misconduct and try to bring his sensory desires under control. He will abstain from using harmful, harsh language on others, but always cultivate pleasant and friendly relationships. He will never engage himself in a livelihood which brings harm to others. A Right Livelihood is one where he does not do or encourage killing, manufacture and trade in destructive weapons or harmful drugs and intoxicants. He will earn a Right Livelihood. Having thus taken to a path of purification in thought, word and deed such a person could concentrate on Right Effort to further purify his thoughts.

Now he is psycho-physically prepared for Right Mindfulness where every moment of his life is spent with awareness. Such a mind can develop Right Concentration to understand the true nature of

human life and the nature of the society and the world around him. This is what Lord Buddha called the Middle Path or the Noble Eight Fold Path which is the only way that suffering can be overcome.

In the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement of Sri Lanka with this way of life in the background of our thoughts we have developed practical programmes so that our mind, our society and our environment can be healed from the myriad of serious ailments that we are faced with today.

We begin with an educational process for parents who bring into this world children. They have to be educated as to how a being comes into this world and the conditions that facilitate the conception and the development of such a being with a consciousness in the mother's womb. We believe that the arising of consciousness also is related to dispositions in the past of a dying person who struggles to continue his existence. Therefore, it is important to understand the true facts about our entering this world at birth and leaving this world at death so that we are prepared for both.

Without this knowledge the parents cannot truly contribute to the development of a human being with the combination of body and mind. Human personality awakening has to be commenced while a human being is still in the mother's womb. We pay attention next to the newly born child. The parents, the members of the family and the community have to provide the person born into this world not only with right nutrition and health care, but also the psycho-social environment for the normal unfolding of his personality.

Sarvodaya has developed an extensive Early Childhood Development Programme cutting across all social, cultural, economic and ethical barriers, in almost 15,000 villages of Sri Lanka. Any tendency to discriminate against any human being has to be totally discouraged and prevented during this early childhood period.

Next we pay our attention to the adolescence where the child begins to develop his identity and even his tendency to acquire false views which may bring about harm to himself and others in adulthood. Sarvodaya youth programmes include a national youth Peace Brigade called Shanti Sena. Participation in gift of labour (shramadana) camps all over the country where various barriers are broken, constructive participation in basic human needs satisfaction programmes in communities, involvement in environmental protection and ecological programmes, organizing Vipassana Meditation and

Meditation on Loving Kindness and participation in mass campaigns of peace meditation where thousands participate with the objective of creating a psychological and spiritual environment where the civil war in the north and east of the country and terrorist activities in the south of the country can be peacefully resolved.

Sarvodaya does not believe without democratic participation of people in their economic life and political governance can be achieved unless in each village area or community the objective of self governance or direct self governance (Gram Swaraj of Gandhian tradition) is achieved. So, we have placed in our village and urban community development programmes the ideal of direct participation in matters pertaining to economic and political life. For this we have developed social, economic and political programmes taking place within village societies so that democratic participation is realized right at the grass roots.

Community based power is the answer to most of the social disturbances and violent upheavals that are brought about by fanatical actions of power hungry rabble rousers in our societies. Community based power is based on an awareness that not only in the immediate present, but also in the long run non-violent power is preferable to and more lasting than power based on fanatical threats and terrorist attacks.

Following on the teachings of the Buddha and the leadership given by Mahatma Gandhi, Dr Ambekkar of India fought for the eradication of untouchability with great success. He followed the Middle Path and so are his followers today. We in Sarvodaya follow Gandhiji's integrated approach to development, peace and education. It is a holistic one. They are all interconnected. For example let us look at Gandhiji's tenets to develop peace and education: Swadeshi, bread labour, Aparigraha or non-possession, trusteeship, non-exploitation, equality, appropriate use of machinery, Satyagraha and basic education. These are all interdependent and form a coherent system. So was Lord Buddha's teachings of Dependent Arising, the Four Noble Truths and the Noble Eight Fold Path.

Diversity is a fact of life in all living beings and things. This fact has to be accepted. Those who pursue fanaticism do not accept the truth of this fact of life. They try to achieve uniformity which is not the true nature of life. Instead unity in diversity is a more sensible objective to pursue. Like any other society in the world our small

country is also full of diversities. But we have succeeded in bringing about unity in this diversity. Sinhala, Tamil and Muslim people all work together as members of one family in our Movement. No fanaticism of any sort whatsoever arises and survives in urban or village communities where Sarvodaya is active. Even if there be some they get transformed. Those who cannot change do not succeed in spreading their dangerous germ to others.

Of course everything in a constructive nonviolent movement of this nature is not smooth going. Openly, or in a subtle way a lot of irresponsible media including the electronic media are trying to plant the seeds of extremist and false views in the minds of gullible people. This contributes in no small measure to foster fanaticism. Media has to exercise more responsibility in their writings and utterances. They should not glorify the deeds of fanatics or terrorists.

Just to give one example - On the 29th August 1999 Sarvodaya Movement gave a call to people of Sri Lanka for them to come to Vihara Maha Devi Park in Central Colombo to spend 3 hours in silent meditation. We expected 100,000 people. Nearly 200,000 people all dressed in white came in 2,700 vehicles, silently marched to the park and sat down and participated in the meditation. Silently they got up and left to their vehicles and departed for their homes. This was an excellent example of self-discipline and acceptance of oneness of humanity. It is an affirmation that there is no problem in the world that cannot be resolved without resorting to violence. Violence needs not be the the way.

Yet, our media which glorify and give wide publicity to fanatical and terrorist acts failed to give the publicity this peace meditation deserved. This speaks a lot about the sad state of communication media in my country. I would like to conclude this speech with one salient fact we all have to remember. We study and measure the extent of physical environmental pollution we have around us. We measure even the damage to the ozone layer up above the skies. Yet, we are ignorant and we pay little heed to the terrible pollution that is increasingly taking place in our own mind and the collective consciousness. This is an aspect to which we in Sarvodaya give highest attention.

For the last two years a Sarvodaya Centre devoted to peace and spiritual renewal has been established close to our Headquarters in two acres of land. This Centre is called Vishva Niketan which means

a Universal Home for Meditation and Peace. There are regular Vipassana Meditation Programmes going on in Vishva Niketan. Groups from all parts of the country , practice meditation and get back to their areas and persuade others to have similar mental purification programmes with hundreds of people participating. There are no religious or other barriers for people to join. While writing this speech I took time off to visit one of the largest prisons in my country called the Mahara Prison and spent 3 hours there getting 1568 re-convicted prisoners to meditate with me. The serious manner they paid attention to this unusual spiritual exercise surprised even the officers who were looking after them under normal prison rules and regulations.

They should realize that, after all, "we are prisoners not because we are surrounded by stone walls and iron gates but because we are slaves to our sensory desires." The ultimate solution to fanaticism and all extremist actions by any group in the world is to get them to look into themselves, to mindfully observe their name and form, mind and body, their consciousness, so that they can get a real grasp of what they are and how they function and what the end-results will be. Deeply looking into the five elements that go to form the body, the sensations that arise from the six senses including the mind, the perceptions and dispositions that we create, all the time in our mind and the laws that govern the above processes, is the only way to get a true understanding of our problems and their resolution.

(A summary of a speech delivered by Dr.A.T.Ariyaratnè, the President of the Sarvodaya Movement of Sri Lanka, to the Seventh Nuremberg Forum, Germany, on 26th September, 2000.)

HEALING DIVIDED SOCIETIES
SRI LANKAN EXPERIENCE

At the very outset it is my duty to express my sincere gratitude to my dear and respected brother Dr Chandra Muzaffar for enabling me and my daughter Sadeeva to participate at this International Conference on Religion and Culture in Asia Pacific: Violence or Healing.

I also wish to express my appreciation to the International Movement for a Just World, Pax Christi (Australia), Uniting Church in Australia, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology and other organizations for sponsoring this Conference.

I come from a Sri Lankan Buddhist and Gandhian background . I represent the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement of Sri Lanka, a people's movement striving to awaken all people through the practice of sharing. For over four decades we have been involved in a nation-wide effort to prevent conflicts as well as to resolve conflicts as an integral part of our self-development work. This involvement has been through an integrated approach looking at problems in a holistic way.

'Healing Divided Societies - a Sri Lankan Experience' is the subject on which I have been asked to speak. What I know best is the Sarvodaya experience in healing our divided Sri Lankan Society to our maximum capacity. I will therefore, confine my remarks to our understanding of the conflicts in my country, the vision that we, in Sarvodaya, have kept before our minds, the practical steps we are taking to resolve these conflicts and perhaps about some lessons we have learnt from our successes and failures.

Sri Lanka was known as a Buddhist country for 2500 years. This was so not only because the majority of people professed Buddhism but also because Buddhist values were largely practised both by the people and rulers. Influence of these values was seen in all sectors of life such as daily living, agriculture, education, health and governance. There was respect and tolerance for all religions, languages, ethnic groups and even for animals and nature as a whole. From the beginning of the sixteenth century when the

Portuguese conquered our maritime provinces followed by the Dutch, and then the British who captured the whole country, everything changed for the worse. The worst happened when we got independence from the British in 1948, but we as a nation failed to discover our own values and build our own social, economic and political institutions to suit our national ethos.

Today Sri Lanka is a divided nation. We have lost the unity we enjoyed amidst diversity. We cannot claim to be a Buddhist country any longer as far as our values are concerned. Killing is rampant in the battlefields of the civil war in the North. Its repercussions are experienced in the bomb explosions and suicide bombings in other parts of the country, where large numbers of innocent civilians are killed. Suicide rates are high and so are the homicides not only related to personal disputes but also due to party and power political conflicts. Even the lives of children are not respected. In the name of development, nature is destroyed and life-support systems are increasingly damaged. Consumption of alcohol and drugs especially by the youth is rampant. In short, a vicious cycle of interdependent evils are affecting the health of our people and our country.

Therefore, we needed a vision to reverse these evil trends and release positive energies to heal our minds, our society and our environment. Our contribution towards this healing process of man, society and nature is the Sarvodaya Movement which we launched in Sri Lanka 42 years ago. Sarvodaya literally means the awakening of all: awakening of the human personality, awakening of families, awakening of village and urban communities, awakening of the national community and awakening of the world community. This awakening at each of these levels includes spiritual, moral, cultural, social, economic and political aspects integrated into a total or holistic process.

What started in one village in 1958 has now expanded into 15,000 village and urban communities. It covers the whole country cutting across all barriers of religion, race and language. Within the little democratic space provided in the midst of an alien political structure and corporate driven economic system, Sarvodaya had to germinate and grow with extreme care and patience to the present level.

Today six and a half million men, women and children outside the privileged but minority mainstream powers, are building a

life and society of their own in spite of the prevailing chaos of violence and conflicts which I mentioned earlier. We are trying to bring about a transformation of our collective consciousness and build an alternative social order from rural and urban communities upwards.

Generally conflicts and violence are highlighted in the media. The fact that most people in the country be they Sinhala, Tamil, Muslim or Burgher are living in harmony amidst this confused social, economic and political environment, is overlooked. Numerous peace and development efforts on the part of the people, are not given the publicity they deserve. For example, on the 29th August 1999, 170,000 people coming into the City of Colombo and conducting a three hour peace meditation programme in absolute silence is not news for both national and international media. Following this mass peace meditation programme, eleven other similar programmes have been held in different parts of the country by Sarvodaya upto now. These are also completely ignored by the media while in the daily press both in Sri Lanka and outside, only violent events and war are reported.

In the words of the Buddha, as stated in Dhammapada:

- "Mind is the forerunner of all states. Mind is chief and mind made are they. If one speaks or acts with a wicked mind, suffering follows one, even as the wheel follows the hoofs of the draught ox.
- If one speaks or acts with a pure mind happiness follows one, even as one's shadow that never leaves."

We in Sarvodaya begin our work in communities with an attempt to build a psychological and social infrastructure in the community. We don't talk of divisions in the village. We talk of Basic Human Needs of people which have to be satisfied for a contented life. These needs may be related to the environmental, water, clothing, food, health, energy, communication, educational, cultural and spiritual needs. The community is assisted to select those needs that can be satisfied without outside help and with their own self-reliance, their own resources and with community participation. Communities are assisted to get organized into Children's Groups, Youth Groups, Women's Groups, Occupational Groups such as Farmers and so on and all these are directed for the satisfaction of Basic Human Needs.

Construction of a new access road to the village, provision of a community water service facility, building a community hall to conduct their early childhood development programmes, construction of a playground, planting trees or repairs to a water reservoir are some of the activities people are encouraged and assisted to carry out by the Sarvodaya Movement. People themselves plan out and implement these activities. In course of time they all join together to form a Village Sarvodaya Shramadana Society and are assisted to obtain recognition as a legally incorporated independent organization.

A need-satisfaction activity brings people together. They donate their labour (Shramadana) and other resources for this work. They can see, feel and use the physical outcome of their labour such as a facility for drinking water. These need-satisfaction oriented activities push to the background numerous divisive factors in the village societies which are generally injected into the village by outside vested interests. So the more dynamic village or community awakening programmes become, the less the tendency for those divisive elements to germinate in the minds of the people. We don't have to talk about conflict resolution or peace making. There is peace. The Path to Peace is Peace itself.

This is only one example of building a psychological one-ness in a community of people through need-related action. Sarvodaya has developed in the course of 42 years, at least 200 such programmes based on their ten Basic Human Needs where people decide and do constructive work on their own. They don't get caught in dogmas and ideologies but slowly acquire a vision of one-ness of humanity and the living world and get accustomed to independent thinking and constructive non-violent action.

If I may put this in a theoretical framework, there are four forms of defilement in the human mind which cause divisions, conflicts, wars, destruction and total chaos at the end, which have to be fought. Firstly, human beings should be discouraged to think in terms of caste, colour, religion, race, political divisions and so on. This can be done without even mentioning these divisions within our communities, but diverting their thoughts to discover the real day to day problems they face and encouraging and helping them to tackle these on their own. So, breaking down the evil of individual or collective ego-centricity is the first task. Building a psy-

chological and social infrastructure where people think globally, but act locally, is our priority.

Secondly, mental divisions lead to the second evil of alienation, anger, hatred or aversions. Thirdly, these aversions result in mutual fear. Fourthly, a mind-set which I call organized ignorance is created. For every problem one faces, an enemy belonging to a particular man-made division is identified. Quite a lot of time is spent even by so called scholars to tell the people the origins of various divisive communities, sufferings they have gone through, victories they have won and how best they can face the future. So, even for their research the situation in the present and what is being done by civil society groups is not only overlooked but also ridiculed. It is this ignorance of reality that ends up with ethnic and religious conflicts, civil wars and political violence. What I mean by ignorance is, not experiencing first hand, the impermanent nature of all causal things, holding on with greed or attaching one self to concepts and opinions that bring about aversions and not knowing that dependently originating nature of life and all other phenomena in our society and nature. It is this kind of enlightenment that can get at the root of all our divisions and discover a non violent way out. Of course, the general civil population is the tool that ignorant vested interests and rabble-rousers use to create divisions in our societies.

Sarvodaya approach is to remove those four evils at their very root. When you are engaged in people's participatory activities related to the real needs of their life, positive energies are released. Their Respect for Life or loving kindness instead of hatred, Mutual Trust and forgiveness instead of fear and finally developing Equanimity in the innermost consciousness of people rather than ignorance get nurtured.

I mentioned that there is an ongoing civil war in Sri Lanka. Some think the problem is the Government. Some others think the problem is the LTTE. Sarvodaya thinks that the problem is not the LTTE or the Government. We think the problem is VIOLENCE and the conditions that nurture and support it. The Sarvodaya goal is to eliminate war and violence from our consciousness, to make war unthinkable.

We begin to bring about this transformation within our own minds first. When we begin any community project we ignore

man-made divisions and concentrate on needs of people. We pursue this further by inter community activities which may be called action to satisfy the secondary needs of people. These needs generally cover more than one community. Therefore, villages where we work are clustered into pioneering villages, intermediate villages and peripheral villages. Each cluster has 10 villages, one pioneering, four intermediate and five peripheral villages. Being a non-violent, non-party, non-political organization we seek co-operation from governmental and local governmental authorities for these programmes. But the core of our thinking is to build a network for co-operation among communities who share our non-sectarian Sarvodaya vision, who become a part of the mission we carry out and to build up a horizontally co-ordinated organizational infrastructure at this secondary level.

At this stage inter-religious and inter-communal harmony progressively becomes a reality. Human relations improve and the vision of a no poverty, no affluence society where peace and justice prevail, enters the collective consciousness of the people. They realize the great potential they have to face problems successfully without becoming a part of the problems themselves. At this secondary level Sarvodaya Village Banks begin to function reducing the dependence of village people on outside credit. The Officials, the Directors and the Managers of the Bank mostly women, after proper management and technical training given by the Sarvodaya Economic Enterprises Development Services (Guarantee) Company Ltd. take over the management of village savings, disbursement of credit and creating self-employment through micro-enterprises. Sustainable and environmentally friendly enterprises satisfying their basic and secondary needs become priority in their economic programmes. Slowly, but surely a non-dependent village economy is created. Nearly 5,000 villages out of the 15,000 where Sarvodaya is active have already reached this stage of development. Within this programme, although it appears to be an economic activity, there are numerous processes for conflict resolution and peace building being released at the same time.

When we take Sri Lanka as a whole 1500 such clusters have come into existence and they are in different stages of evolution as a movement for non-violent social transformation. This kind of constructive processes do not function in a vacuum. Neither are

they implemented without difficulties or obstructions. Certain narrow minded politicians who cannot think beyond their own survival, cowardly bureaucrats who are bound by not only colonial administrative and financial regulations but also who have become like pets of politicians and profit making community level commercial interests, sometimes ridicule, discourage and often attempt to sabotage our efforts. This is where Gandhian principle of non-violence and holding fast to Truth (Satyagraha) give us courage, discipline and guidance. Buddhist value of tolerance has to be exercised fully. As you can understand this is not easy. But this is the only way open for the non privileged masses in our country.

Violent protests and violent upheavals in my opinion are self-defeating and bring about increased violence and suffering to all. Non violent direct action in a constructive way is the path we have chosen. From the basic and secondary levels we have to reach tertiary levels of need-satisfaction. We get ourselves organized at the district and national levels so that our mission takes national proportions without ourselves creating top down hierarchies . We do this through divisional centres which bring together about five clusters, district centres which bring together 10 to 15 divisional centres and the national headquarters where 36 district centres situated in 25 districts in the country are co-ordinated.

Tertiary level activities of Sarvodaya are conducted through this network. For example the Early Childhood Development Programme has a specialized unit to support that sector of the community nationally. Protection and care of children in the fields of nutrition, health care, psycho social development, disabilities, child abuse and so on are the areas that this national specialized body is dealing with. Similarly, over 100,000 youth volunteers in Sarvodaya Peace Brigade (Shanti Sena) are co-ordinated by another specialized unit at the headquarters. Sarvodaya Women's Movement operates with the women's groups in all the communities.

The welfare wing of Sarvodaya, Suwasetha Sewa Society Limited looks after orphans, the disabled, abused women and children, refugees and the elderly. Sarvodaya Legal Services Movement attends to the matters pertaining to legal literacy, human rights violations and rehabilitation of convicted persons. The newly founded Sarvodaya Vishva Niketan International Peace and

Meditation Centre spearheads the spiritual revival programme where meditation programmes for groups and mass peace meditation programmes are conducted. In this manner there are 12 specialized Sarvodaya organizations dealing with problems at national level.

So far what I have spoken about are our efforts and experiences from a non traditional and non conformist approach to development and peace. What is most important is that this is a practical programme which can be seen and experienced by anybody who care to participate. There is no publicity drive in this movement as it is difficult to transform people into a vision from an ideology by propaganda alone. What is most important is individual, family, group and community transformation so that a critical mass of spiritual consciousness transcending caste, race, religion, class and party politics can be realized.

In conclusion I would like to refer again to the continuing war in our country. We refuse to believe that this war can be won by either side. All they can do is to continue it. Violence begets violence is the teaching of the Buddha which we strongly follow. Hatred can be overcome only by non-hatred. Even though this cannot be won by any side we believe that the war can be transcended. Sarvodaya can help Sri Lankans to transcend the war.

In order to have authentic peace, we must recognize that violence arises from deep conflicts within a society. These conflicts must be healed. The roots of violence must be eradicated for real peace to be established. Military-styled peace keepers cannot bring peace. We must envision a true post conflict society. In Sri Lanka we have to think of the different fields of conflict. They are the military field, the political field, the economic field, the psychological field, the ethnic and cultural field and the spiritual field. Our programme took into consideration all these fields and drew up a Sarvodaya People's Peace Plan. It is not something written only on paper. It is something that happens in thousands of places in our country. It helps people to overcome internalized violence, including alcoholism, drugs and deliberate self-harm and also to overcome externalized violence including rape, murder and war. This is not the forum to go into details of the Sarvodaya Peace Plan. But I will end by referring to what we in Sarvodaya call a Five R Programme which we have been implementing with the very mea-

gre resources we have, right from the inception of the national conflict.

The Sarvodaya has continued to work throughout the conflict-affected areas of the North and East maintaining strict neutrality with the aim of serving the affected people in the best possible way. The Five 'R' programme unit co-ordinates services in the North and East of the country. This unit implements a programme on a holistic approach for addressing the needs of the nearly 600,000 people affected and displaced by the ongoing conflict. The Five 'R' programme views the problems of the displaced persons in its entirety and works towards their resolution within a holistic context. By encouraging people to forget the past, look to the future and face the challenges ahead, those affected are facilitated to help themselves.

Relief by way of emergency help, providing food, temporary shelters, clothing, medical assistance and instilling hope in the hopeless.

Rehabilitation begins with organising the displaced persons, encouraging them to come forward to participate in building semi-permanent housing, better sanitary facilities, finding an assured food supply, and introducing temporary educational facilities and programmes for children, finally assisting them to engage in self-supporting income generation activities.

Reconstruction is the need where displaced persons have returned to their areas. They are assisted as they begin to settle down by providing improved housing, sanitary facilities, health and medical facilities, schools, permanent income generation and facilities necessary for the re-establishment of a normal community life.

Reconciliation is a part of the holistic approach that is essential throughout the process of relief rehabilitation and reconstruction. It is the psychosocial process where spiritual, moral, cultural and social programmes are organized to develop mutual respect, confidence and sharing among the affected and conflicting parties without any distinctions of caste, class, religion, language or community.

Reawakening aims at attaining the goal of helping in up-lifting and re-uniting the affected community into the integral scheme of life. This reawakening programme aims at integrating the com-

munities so that they take their equal place among the thousands of other Sarvodaya villages in the country participating in all the gramadana, divisional, provincial and national programmes.

Except for those organizations which look at the Sri Lankan issues pertaining to development and peace in depth, Sarvodaya is not a favourite for funders. The suffering of people have led some so called NGO entrepreneurs both national and international to follow only a superficial path to development and peace where only the symptoms are tackled. Still, there are a few funding organizations who see the short term as well as the long term relevance of what Sarvodaya is doing. They are strongly with us and we are indebted to them. At the international level we fully co- operate with those organizations who are opposed to war, armament production and multi national control of our societies. We want our present generation to live and survive, and also to leave behind for the coming generations a world where all can be mutually at peace on a planet which is healthy. Healing the mind, healing the society and healing the earth are our objectives.

Thank you.

A talk delivered by Dr A. T. Ariyaratne, President of the Sarvodaya Movement in Sri Lanka, at the International Conference - Religion and Culture in Asia Pacific, on "Violence or Healing" RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia 22 to 25 October 2000

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INAUGURAL ADDRESS BY DR. A.T. ARIYARATNE (AT THE 57TH ANNUAL SESSION OF THE SRI LANKA ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE)

Professor J.N.O. Fernando, General President,
Datuk Dr M. Mohinder Singh, Sessional Chief Guest,
Dr Janaka Ratnasiri, General President-Elect,
Professor Dayantha Wijesekera, Vice-Chancellor, University of Moratuwa,
Distinguished Members,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today is a very significant day for us in the Sarvodaya Movement of Sri Lanka. This is because the Sri Lanka Association for the Advancement of Science is holding its inaugural session of the 57th Annual Session at our Sarvodaya Conference Hall, Vishva Samadhi. The Sarvodaya Movement believes that peace and prosperity for our people can only be achieved by the proper harmonization of science and technology with spirituality. Therefore your deliberations will be of much importance to our activities as well.

As the President of the Sarvodaya Movement I take this opportunity to welcome with deep affection and warmth all of you who are present here. I offer a special welcome to our distinguished Sessional Chief Guest Datuk Dr. N.M. Mohinder Singh from Malaysia.

I witnessed during the last few months the tremendous efforts made by Professor J.N.O. Fernando, the General President and his colleagues to make this Session and the connected activities a great success. Therefore, I was delighted and humbled when I was invited to be the Chief Guest at this inauguration ceremony and speak a few words. Thank you for this great honour.

For me personally this is an occasion when my mind goes back to the 1950s and 1960s when I was a science teacher at Nalanda College. I always encouraged my students to study science and at the same time awaken their personalities by looking at everything anew and developing a creative spirit. Today when I see some of

those students in the highest academic and professional positions both in our own country and abroad, in places like NASA, I get a tremendous joy for being a teacher. Subsequently, having got qualified in humanities I taught subjects like economics and political science until I resigned from my job to devote my full time for Sarvodaya. I continue to this day both as a student and a community educator with masses of rural people in Sri Lanka as well as in other countries. This kind of teaching experience which in actual fact is a learning process has convinced me that the time has come for us to have a fresh look at the role of science and its technological applications as relevant to the masses of common people who inhabit our planet. Therefore, it is with a very keen interest that I look forward to your deliberations on the subject "Towards a Knowledge Based Economy: Role of Scientists and Technologists."

You may have heard about a great Chinese educator by the name Dr James Yen. During the First World War he started literacy classes for Chinese labourers working in France, which became popularly known as the Mass Education Movement. He taught thousands of Chinese labourers simplified Chinese with which they could communicate with their relations back home. He continued this programme after the war in China and later in the Philippines. He founded and developed what came to be internationally known as the International Institute of Rural Reconstruction. I came to know him in the sixties and associated with him and learnt a lot from him until he died at the ripe age of 97 years. He trained a category of rural workers called Science Simplifiers. They took the modern scientific knowledge and technological know-how in a way that village people could learn, master and apply them in their day to day education, health, livelihood and self-governance programmes.

Dr E.F. Schumacher who was also a life long friend of mine introduced through his Intermediate Technology Development Group based in London another method of taking to the people the scientific know-how and appropriate technology to improve their quality of life. I am sure all of you have read his writings specially his famous book "Small is Beautiful," which was translated into many languages including Sinhala while he was still alive.

As early as 1972 I realized that it was extremely difficult to change the system of education particularly in the most vital scientific sector as long as education was directed and controlled by bureaucrats and not by educationists. On my part I decided to leave the system and try on my own to serve our country as a voluntary worker in the Sarvodaya Movement which we founded in 1958 with students and teachers of Nalanda. Thanks to my peers, colleagues and village people in over 15000 villages in this country who cooperated with us, today, we have a working model 'to transform our society to a new one, without forgetting that we are doing it with an old society.'

We had two obstacles to surmount in bringing knowledge to the people so that their wisdom could be used to improve their living conditions with their own self-reliance and community participation using science and technology as appropriate for their own cultural, social and natural environment. One was the bureaucracy and the other politicians backed by servile political appointees to important positions of decision-making in the administration.

The kind of bureaucrats, with no professional background who were planted in our administrative system did not allow creative minds to take over the control of the destiny of our nation. The colonial masters also devised the kind of parliamentary system of representation based on a centralized party and power political system. Of course this system underwent several changes including a Presidential System which in no way brought the people of the country into the centre of the stage. Any innovative development in our system of governance is still a distant dream because of our slavish mentality which prevents us from doing anything creative on our own indigenous genius. When we talk of using science and technology for the development of our country, therefore, I believe that we have to overcome the western models of governance, administration and development by creative research in every field of science including the social sciences.

Professor S.M. Arsakularatne in his paper published in Science in Sri Lanka Volume 2 No. 3 has dealt with this subject. I think we should seriously consider the five myths he has pointed out and enlighten teachers, students and the general public if we are to progress in the field of scientific research. I quote from Professor

Arsakularatne. "The entire situation is reflected in George Bernard Shaw's famous quote " Those who can do, do. The others teach". To this statement has been added."Those who cannot do either, administer and our organizations for science including the universities have people of the third category to unfortunately pontificate on research by young enthusiastic staff."

What has happened during the last two to three decades is that an overriding percentage of educated bureaucrats have become tools in the hands of politicians most of whom are illiterate in the subjects they are entrusted with. So, most of them do not use their decision-making positions for the good of the country, but more as a means to grant favours for their party supporters, friends, their kith and kin, and also to amass wealth.

A couple of days ago I met the famous young dancer and drummer Ravi Bandu. He related to me a story his father had told him. It goes as follows: A young enthusiastic man wanted to be an architect. He went to a very famous architect in India and requested him to teach him architecture. The architect asked him whether he knew sculpture. He said no. The architect asked him first to learn sculpture. So he went to a famous sculptor and the sculptor asked him whether he could draw. When he said no he was asked to go to an artist and learn art because without rhythm and line you cannot be a sculptor. So he went to an artist. The artist asked him whether he could dance. When he said no he was asked to go to a dancing teacher. He went to a famous dancing teacher. The dancing teacher asked him whether he knew any music, without which he could not learn dancing because he had to learn "Bhava" (Mood) "Raga" (Melody) and Thala (rhythm) before he could learn dancing. So he was asked to go to a musician. The musician asked him first to go to nature listening to the music on the sea shore, in the forest, under waterfalls, the wind and so on.

This story brings out one point. Whatever specialized subjects we have generally under the theme science, technology or humanities and so on we have to remember that there is an interrelationship between all these departments of knowledge. 2,000 years ago at the library of Alexandria, the best minds of that time gathered and laid the foundations for a systematic study of physics, mathematics, biology, astronomy, literature, geography and medicine. 500 years before that our ancestors had at Lovamahapaya, the

seven storeyed library of the Maha Vihara. So we also may have had a history of scholarship where general as well as specialized knowledge was pursued.

Once I was confronted by a Marxist who gave me a brilliant exposition of the Theory of Surplus Value. I asked him whether he knew anything about the Theory of Surplus Merit. He was puzzled. Maha Seya or Ruwanveliseya or any other Dagoba , our tanks and irrigation canals and other public utilities were not built by forced labour like in Rome, Greece or Egypt. People worked to their maximum whether it was physical or mental labour, but collected from the four stores surrounding the Mahaseya only what they needed and no more. The extra was surplus merit which they accumulated to take with them to the next world. Today of course it is the opposite. People are motivated by greed and collect as surplus what we call sins, not thinking of a next world or even a next generation.

It is a good idea I think for the SLAAS to assign a group of scholars to research on the History and Evolution of Scientific Thought and Practice of Technology in Sri Lanka. This should include the whole spectrum of sciences from the Buddha's Theory of Dependent Origination to Irrigation Works of the past and present. You may have read Gary Zukav's Dancing Wuli Masters – An overview of the New Physics. Its Chapter on THE ROLE OF "I" brings out ideas like ' .. but we have accumulated evidence which indicates that the key to understanding the universe is you.' 'The new physics tells us that an observer cannot observe without altering what he sees. Observer and observed are interrelated in a real and fundamental sense.'

At this stage I like to quote from a speech made by Senator Howard Baker, famous for his position on the Watergate Committee, which he delivered at the Annual Convention of American Paper Institute in New York City. "It will no doubt be recorded that the United States in the twentieth century achieved a degree of technical expertise and industrial capacity that improved the material well-being of our citizens. It must also be said that in doing so we squandered our natural resources, and in raising our standard of living we contributed to lowering our quality of life. Only in this decade has environmental quality truly become a cause of national concern. Through the nearly two hundred years of our

history, we have depended primarily on the natural recycling system of our air and water to absorb the large quantities of the pollutants as by-products of our industrial development. Our growing population and burgeoning industrial economy have in this century put strains on our natural purification system. The bill for years of neglect is now coming due, itemized in the headlines chronicling eco-catastrophes."

(I got this quotation from "Towards Stewardship " by William J. Byron, S.J. Ref. Congressional Record, 93rd Congress, 1st Session, Vol. 119, No. 45 (March 22, 1973), P. S5502.Paulist Press, New York/Paramus/Toronto)

Looking at our own environmental situation, while I admit that there is a lot of awareness and concern today than a few years ago, there is so much yet to be done before it is too late. While it is important that research inside laboratories should continue I believe that an equal or more effort should be put in to educate the public, alert the legislators, have a scientific eye on the effects of globalization and watch the insidious ways in which national and international vested interests are threatening our life support systems.

The benefits of learning and utilizing science and technology should not be left in the hands of a privileged few. We should use all our innovative skills to place this knowledge and practices in the creative hands of our masses. This can be done if only the village and urban communities in Sri Lanka are organized in a scientific way. In the Sarvodaya Development Programmes we assist these communities to organize themselves and progress in five stages toward what we call village\community self-governance.

Our ideal is to transform our country into a Republic of Self-governing Village and Urban Communities where Participatory Peoples Politics will replace the existing degenerate party and power political system. Our traditional spiritual value systems and the most modern communication technology are two important tools available to us to achieve this ideal. We are already doing this with regular organization of meditation programmes from our Vishwa Niketan- International Peace and Meditation Centre and the establishment of Telecentres with the advice of the University of Colombo.

The steps that Sri Lanka Association for the Advancement of Science, the National Academy of Science and other scientific bodies have adopted to reach the young scientists are most welcome. Through schools and Sarvodaya centres around the country, the SLAAS should strengthen and further extend this programme. We will extend our fullest co-operation to you as we already have a network of village, divisional and district centers covering the whole country.

While research in specialized sectors should go on, I believe that, more attention should be paid to areas which directly concern and contribute to improve the quality of life of the people as a whole and not the standard of living of a rich and powerful few. People need at least simplified scientific knowledge pertaining to the Environment and Ecology, Water and Sanitation, Food and Agriculture, Health and Disease, Housing and Communication, Energy and so on. These are what we call basic needs. Once they have the knowledge their inherent wisdom will guide them to use that knowledge in a way to support and protect their life support systems.

In conclusion I would say we need an integrated scientific approach: (1) to transform the consciousness of the people as a whole toward a spiritual and ethical direction (2) to develop our production system primarily to cater to the basic, secondary and tertiary needs of the people and not for the satisfaction of the greed of a few and (3) to reorganize the political, economic and bureaucratic power structure of the country so that people can directly and truly participate in restructuring their communities and their countries.

So the question is what should be the role of the scientist and the technologist and the professionals to build such a peaceful and sane society in a healthy environment ?

Once again I like to thank Professor J.N.O. Fernando and the Council for giving me this opportunity. I wish the 57th Annual Session of the SLAAS great success.

Inaugural address by A.T.Ariyaratne at the 57th Annual Session of the Sri Lanka Association for the Advancement of Science on November 26, 2001 at Sarvodaya Vishva Samadhi Hall, Moratuwa.

NON VIOLENCE AND SARVODAYA MOVEMENT IN THE MIDST OF THE CONFLICTING SITUATION IN SRI LANKA

I am honoured to be at this 30th Anniversary Commemorative Meeting of the World Conference on Religion and Peace. I extend my very sincere thanks to the Governing Board of WCRP Japanese Committee for inviting me and asking me to speak a few words on the application of Non-Violent Strategies in the Conflict Situation in Sri Lanka.

Before I make my remarks on this subject I would like to pay my tribute to the religious dignitaries and other civic leaders who founded this historic organization which they named World Conference on Religion and Peace. I feel I have a great personal satisfaction when I recollect the association of the Sarvodaya Movement very closely with WCRP and it is with deep respect that I remember the late Professor L.G. Hewage of Sri Lanka who was responsible for bringing me and Sarvodaya into this great Interfaith Movement for Peace. I believe all those who are gathered here will agree with me that the unique contribution made by the religious leaders of Japan both by their dedication to the cause as well as by sharing their resources have contributed in no small measure to the success of the WCRP and the international recognition it had received as a major contributor for building peace in our conflict ridden world.

There is a civil war in Sri Lanka. Even though the real fighting is going on in certain parts of the Northern and Eastern provinces of Sri Lanka its effects are felt everywhere. Most families have lost one or more of their loved ones in this violent confrontation. Thousands are maimed for life. Tens of thousands have become refugees in their own country or outside. Like in any other war the loss of lives, destruction of properties, people becoming homeless and immense suffering are the results of this conflict.

For us Non Violence is an absolute value. It can hardly be compromised. Violence is always associated with ill will, anger and hatred. Violence will always breed violence. Nonviolence is asso-

ciated with compassion, forgiveness and reconciliation. Lord Buddha enunciated that it is an Eternal Law. So whatever intervention we make into this conflict is based on non violence.

Sarvodaya Movement depending on the resources it has and the capacity to intervene is active in Relief, Rehabilitation, Reconstruction, Reconciliation and Reawakening programmes for the affected people. Also, the Sarvodaya Movement is harnessing the spiritual energies of people of all faiths by organizing massive peace meditation programmes. During the year beginning from August 1999 to August 2000 Sarvodaya brought together nearly 300,000 citizens of Sri Lanka from all communities and faiths to join this mass meditation efforts. The principal objective of this programme is to bring about a transformation in the consciousness of people so that resorting to violence and war becomes unthinkable for civilized people.

Conflicts are not caused by any single cause. There is a multiplicity of causes that lead to a conflict situation. Lord Buddha's teaching on Paticca Samuppada or the Dependent Arising is most important when we think about the solutions to the continuing violence. Poverty, ignorance, lack of democratic freedoms and discrimination on grounds of caste, race or party politics and so on cumulatively contribute to the creation of conflict situations which at the end lead to senseless bloodshed.

Sarvodaya Movement which started 42 years ago has implemented an integrated community awakening programme attacking the roots of those conflicts. In 15,000 villages irrespective of caste, race, religion or political differences in people an integrated programme to bring people together and help them to improve their conditions has taken a national proportion today. Over 100,000 youth belonging to about 9,000 small groups calling themselves Peace Brigades are doing everything possible to remove mistrust and ill will from the minds and hearts of people and are jointly organizing programmes where everyone is treated as an equal and participate in constructive work that benefit the communities. This is a positive force for peace building, interfaith harmony and communal unity.

Even a small incident of violence is reported world wide by the media. This is not so when it comes to non-violent actions. Such actions are generally ignored.

Fortunately, all the people in Sri Lanka are not at war against one another. It is not a fight between the Sinhala speaking community and Tamil speaking community. It is fundamentally a conflict created by political elements who try to benefit from the communal and linguistic differences of people for their own narrow goals of getting into power. It is this situation which slowly shifted from democratic non violent actions for justice and peace and turned into a brutal war which has already taken the lives of over 60,000 people, maimed many more and still more people were made refugees in their own country or outside.

According to our belief 99% of the people in Sri Lanka are opposed to this war and violence. What Sarvodaya is doing is to organize these people who are against violence and war so that the psychological, social, economic and political climate can be created to make those who have resorted to violent solutions to change their minds and look for non violent conciliatory alternatives.

Unfortunately, this kind of effort made by people's organizations led by the Sarvodaya Movement is not given the recognition and wide spread publicity by the media as well as those who have vested interests in the war. This does not discourage us as everyday more and more peace loving citizens are joining our ranks of peace builders.

In conclusion I would like to express our confidence and faith in the World Conference on Religion and Peace which is the largest global network of religious communities which encourage organizations and movements like ours for cooperative actions for peace. To us in Sarvodaya, the way to peace is peace itself. That is why we have established a special international institution for peace and meditation called Vishva Niketan where we facilitate people of all faiths to develop inner and outer peace. We believe we can create a critical mass of spiritual consciousness which will one day erase from the minds of majority of human beings all thoughts of violence. I urge the WCRP to continue to give its encouragement.

Thank you.

This speech delivered by Dr. A.T. Ariyaratne at the World Conference on Religion and Peace 30th Anniversary Celebrations - Kyoto. Japan - 27.11.2000

SOME THOUGHTS ON TECHNOLOGY AND RURAL AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

We are living in a highly specialized world. Even a scientific discipline in a particular field today is subdivided into numerous subspecialties. Our general understanding of that subject as a whole is lost sight of. This is true in all sciences whether they be physical, biological or social sciences. So is the subject of development. There are numerous fields to which the subject of development also is divided and subdivided. For example rural development is clearly differentiated from urban development. Each of these is again specialized into, various sectors such as agricultural, industrial, commercial and so on. The end result of all this is that the most important subject of any development, the human being, along with his basic social unit, the family and the community, is marginalized and finally lost sight of. They become decimated statistics in national percentage calculations. This is a fundamental error we have to correct in all theoretical and practical programmes dealing with development.

The human being should be the subject and not the object of development. We must learn and practice human-centered development.

If the human being is alienated or marginalized this only means that we have lost sight of lite and consciousness without which humans and the animals cannot survive on this planet. This is true for the entire human world as well as for the rest of the living beings and the plant kingdom. It is necessary that everything living should be made to sustain itself in a living and non-living environment with a sustainable equilibrium. Today we are living in a world where we talk of sustainable development. It is time that we translate these words into concrete action.

All of you belong to the field of technology. This is your specialty. I believe that the Association of Franco-Ceylonese Technologists, therefore, is a get-together of scientists and technologists concerned with improving the quality of life of human beings in Sri Lanka in an environment where life support systems

are protected, enhanced and sustained. Human society has gone through radical transformations in different periods of history. Be it the old stone age, new stone age, agricultural age, industrial age or the post industrial age, we have to remember that all transformations started with the discovery and use of new technology. With the application of a particular new technology, and the changes it brought about in human life and society the world over, people had undergone changes in their values, their customs and their economic relationships. Political and social organizations brought about a fundamental change giving rise to new civilizations.

Whatever development work we do, we have to carefully watch the technological changes that take place in our society and accordingly direct these to ensure good life and peace for all. When technical innovations are utilized for the benefit of an already privileged few to the neglect of a vast majority of people who do not have the advantage of mastering and using that lechnology major social disparities are created. The unbalanced development of urban and rural communities as well as the existence of rich and poor classes both in rural and urban sectors invariably lead to frustrations, conflicts and violence ultimately ending up in even national social disasters like the prevailing civil war in our country.

Economic disparities and the resulting suffering on the part of a majority imposed by an affluent minority in a country which has a party and power political system is a fertile ground for power hungry politicians to exploit that situation for their advantage. It is in this kind of social milieu that communal and ethnic disharmony takes root and aggravates the situation to violent conflicts. This is not a localized situation confined to our country only. It is a phenomenon that has taken global proportions. In such a global environment hundreds of millions of people are marginalized while a few millions are affluent.

I will confine myself to making a few general remarks for your consideration, particularly in relation to community life in Sri Lanka as this seminar is on Rural Agricultural Development.

If you take the economies of most of the advanced countries as a model you will agree with me that in those societies the meanings

they attribute to rural society, agriculture and development are not the same as in our societies . All these are integrated components of a technological enviromnent which can even be called a technosphere. Our rural areas with the intervention of globalization policies are also slowly but steadily heading towards the creation of the same kind of an undesirable technosphere though we are still in a position to slow down and reverse this trend.

In rich countries the vast majority of people both in their public and private life have become a part of this technosphere so much so that they are fast losing their individual, family and community identities which were an integral part of human life. They work, live and spend most of their daily lite in something like a technological grid and find it extremely difficult to detach themselves as human beings from that system. The consequences of this kind of condition is disastrous for the peace and happiness of people. So, today they are trying to discover ways and means of building a post industrial society where their previous spiritual, moral and socio-cultural life could be revived. This is a very difficult task.

On the other hand a community life, worth preserving, is still found in our rural areas. With regard to values and cultures everything is not yet lost. Natural and social environment has been destroyed very much, but I would say not beyond redemption. You may remember a time when those of us who wanted both technology and the human side of lite were talking about Appropriate Technology. Dr E.F Schumacher's "Small is Beautiful" which was translated into many languages brought this message to most people engaged in development activities at that time. However, that enthusiasm has been killed today with high lechnology propagated, glorified, facilitated and funded by Governments and Multi National Corporations of the rich world. For them it is good business from which they receive the giant share of profits. The poorer countries are paying a very high price both economically and socially for these inappropriate technology transfers. For example, a sustainable village agriculture appears to be on the way out. With the modified seeds now being used, even within Sri Lankan villages, farmers may not even retain some seeds for their next crop. They are forced to buy seeds at ever increasing prices, apply the

recommended chemical fertilisers, weedicides and pesticides also at increasing prices and ultimately lose the natural fertility of their lands. Our farmers are simply a market for the products ot multinational corporations.

We have to approach technology with an open but penetrative mind. We should not adopt everything 'modern' that comes from the West. While we welcome all scientific knowledge to enrich our understanding of ourselves, our physical, psychological and biological environment, we have to remember that there is a big difference between knowledge and wisdom. We should apply scientific knowledge into technical innovations guided by wisdom. The world has been polluted and even physically destroyed by applying scientific knowledge unwisely.

Think of the new knowledge discovered in physics, biology, cosmology and consciousness. All these and other sciences have discarded the mechanistic and fragmented view of our world. AII of them have come into the conclusion that everything living and non living are inter connected and inter dependent. Therefore, as technologists you have to look at the wholeness of life, society and nature and adopt technological innovations in relation to these.

Modern physics accepts the fact that all fundamental units of the physical world are interconnected, from the smallest particle to the vast cosmos. In biology the concept that the whole is more than the sum of its parts is accepted today, a fact that the Buddhist teachings have explained for two and a half millennia.. Therefore, in all domains of life there is interconnectedness or coherence from the microscopic element in an organism to totality of nature. In our cultures we believed that all life on this planet and all forms of consciousness are interconnected, a fact that is just beginning to be accepted by the Western science.

I belong to a Movement which has evolved on these concepts for nearly five decades. We do not define development only in economic terms. We look at the spiritual, moral, cultural, social and political awakening of the people as well along with the immaterial progress as an integrated process. We do not try to improve the so called standard of living of the people. We are more concerned with their quality of life. We want people to awaken their person-

ality to the fullest in this life. We want them to live a full life in an awakened family and an awakened community. For us real development is a total awakening process beginning with human personalities extending to the global community. We call it Sarvodaya, Awakening of All in every aspect of life. This is a word which was coined by Mahatma Gandhi which we accepted as it gives the full meaning of what we are trying to achieve from the village level to national and international levels. Sarvodaya opens a vast new creative space for us where our innovative skills can be developed and used and where the knowledge and wisdom can be harmoniously combined for the good of all.

Sarvodaya has its presence in over 15000 villages in Sri Lanka. Each village community is motivated and assisted to build on their self-reliance, community participation and simplified and relevant scientific know how. They are trained to identify their basic needs and the ways and means to satisfy them with what they have and what they know. Their physical efforts as well as their own resources are harnessed during the initial stages of their development or what we call the awakening process. In the Basic Needs Satisfaction Programme no one is left out. The whole village community, beginning with the preschool child, through school going children, youth, women, farmers and elders become participant-baneficiaries of their self-development process.

Basic Human Needs are broadly categorized under the following Heads: A Clean and Beautiful Physical and Psychological Environment, A Clean and Adequate Supply of Water both for drinking and agricultural purposes, Simple Clothing, Balanced Nutrition, Modest Housing, Health and Sanitation, Energy Requirements, Communication, Total Education, Cultural and Spiritual Needs. These Needs can be divided into sub-needs according to the particular environment in which need satisfaction activities take place and also depending on the particular age group or the occupational group. This is the reason why an interdisciplinary approach is necessary when outside groups try to assist or intervene with the life of our village communities. Guidance of social, biological and physical scientists should be sought when new technologies are introduced to village development work. **The new technologies we introduce should be with their acceptance**

and within their understanding and control. No new technology should make them dependent on the powers that be, whether it is lhc government or big business or any other vested interest. In its work Sarvodaya has followed this principle. For example, it introduced EM to farmers, only when Sarvodaya itself was able to manufacture the ingredients needed. Thus over a few years there has been no increase in the price ot the product we make available to our farmers.

We are witnessing today the heavy price we have to pay by indiscriminate introduction of new technologies that are destroying our life support systems. Land, water, fauna and flora and atmosphere have been affected adversely threatening our ecological security. Similarly commodification of every aspect of land, water, genetic resources, common spaces, health systems, education and culture is being introduced to every community on this planet in the name of free trade and globalization. Every conceivable thing is brought to the market place as a commodity that may be bought and sold. As everything is reduced to money, those who control wealth also control technology. Democracy has been reduced to a high sounding word without any content as far as the people are concerened.

These are some of the issues you have to seriously consider when you plan for agriculture and rural development. After nearly five decades of experience the Sarvodaya Movement has resolved that nothing short of a total non-violent revolutionary approach can help rural and urban poor to have a just place under the sun. This approach is an integrated process where each community is assisted to build a psychological, social, economic, technological, financial and self-governing infrastructure. They strive to achieve their own alternative democratie legitimacy. In short their aim is to transform their village society into a self-governing Village Republic and Sri Lanka into a Commonwealth of Village Republics. When Mahatma Gandhi introduced the Sarvodaya concept this was his ideal for the post independent India. We in Sri Lanka continued on the path he initiated.

This lecture delivered by Dr. A. T Ariyaratne, Founder and President af the Sarvodaya Movernent of Sri Lanka, to the Associatian af Franco-Ceylonese Technologists on 19.1.2002.

SIR BARON JAYATILAKA MEMORIAL LECTURE

A BUDDHIST VISION FOR THE FUTURE

I am thankful to Mr. Noel Wijenayake, President of the YMBA, Colombo and the Members of the Board of Management for inviting me to deliver the **Sir D. B. Jayatilaka** Memorial Lecture. I am also thankful to Mr. Rajah Kuruppu for encouraging me to accept this invitation and even suggesting **A Buddhist Vision for the Future** as an appropriate subject, which I willingly accepted.

As a child I have a vague remembrance of seeing **Sir Baron Jayatilaka** at Ananda College when he was engaged in a literary debate along with Mr. Munidasa Kumaranatunge. Then again, I have had a glimpse of him at *Anuradhapura* at the pinnacle placing ceremony of the *Ruwanveliseya*. Both times I remember I was kept on the shoulders of my father, which enabled me to see this great personality.

Whatever I know of **Sir Baron Jayatilaka** was gathered by reading books about him written by Mr. G.P.D. Jinadasa and Deshamanya Pandit Dr. Nandadeva Wijesekera and of course from articles that appeared from time to time in the YMBA Journal **"The Buddhist"**. I am indebted to these authors for whatever references I make during the course my speech to **Sir Baron Jayatilaka's** life and mission.

Quite early in life, in the kind of development work I was doing, I realized, that teachings of the Buddha should not be reduced to an ideology, a set of sectarian beliefs or principles on which I should base my community services. I felt that ideologies always bring about divisions in the minds of people. On the other hand I experienced that if I develop a vision based on the Teachings of the Buddha as a whole, that kind of mindset would help me in what I was trying to do for the benefit of my own spiritual life and the progress of my country. As a follower of the Buddha and His

Teachings, I identified my work as a service motivated by A Buddhist Vision. Very often I referred to the Sarvodaya Movement as an attempt to translate Buddha's Teachings into development action. This is the reason why I agreed to the topic "**A Buddhist Vision for the Future**" for my talk this evening.

A Buddhist Vision is not necessarily a Buddhist's Vision or a Vision of the Buddhists. It is a vision that could be open to anybody, Buddhist or non-Buddhist alike. It is also not necessarily the thinking of a Buddhist about the future. What is important here is a Vision that is based on Buddha's teachings which help to overcome the serious challenges humans are facing today and contribute to the survival of humanity and other forms of life, in peace and harmony, in a livable physical environment.

Sir Baron had a profound knowledge of Buddhism, Buddhist Culture and the needs and aspirations of the people of his time. He had a clear vision of the role his own personality had to play, for the fulfillment of his own life, for the revival of Buddhist culture and society, for the freedom of his country, for the wellbeing of all people in his country, for the unity of the nation, and for international peace and harmony.

I believe it is this vision, well-established in his mind, that helped him to reach such great national and international heights in a variety of fields such as education, health, food security, revival of language and religion, art and literature, interfaith harmony, international brotherhood, diplomacy and world affairs. Steering the country towards self-governance while simultaneously awakening the people spiritually, morally, culturally, socially and economically to accept the responsibilities of a free nation, to a large extent, I believe, was the result of his clear vision founded on the Teachings of the Buddha.

To translate his vision into concrete action he chose the Middle Path shown by the Buddha. Like his contemporary Mahatma Gandhi, Sir Baron believed that Good Ends can never be achieved through Bad Means. He preferred non-violence to violence and was not perturbed by criticism as long as he achieved his intended results; much sooner than it would have been had he adopted the method of violent confrontation. The very pragmatic approach he

made in presenting the first ever budget by a Sri Lankan to the First State Council of Sri Lanka in 1931 September 22 is a good example of his vision. In his budget speech, giving his reason for increasing the allocation for education he said *"Lack of funds is no reason for not promoting education. It will retard the progress of the country. We have to educate every child in our villages. It is not easy. Under the new Constitution both males and fenmales enjoy universal franchise. There is no greater danger for a country than a democratic government elected by ignorant people. If we are to prevent this we have to enable every child to learn. I an? not talking of higher education. I am talking of giving a basic education to all children in the country."*

When his income tax laws angered the local and foreign capitalists-he reminded those well - to - do people about their responsibility towards the poor who earn money for them. He saw to it that nobody opened new liquor shops and also took every step to close down those, which were already functioning. He was the first Buddhist to be knighted by the British Empire. But he accepted and used it to promote his national cause. In spite of the respect and acceptance he enjoyed from the British Government he always took the side of the people and reminded the British that fighting for independence for our people is not necessarily being antagonistic to the British Government. He had a vision for the future of his country and that vision was A Buddhist Vision. You who are members of the YMBA will no doubt agree with me that the following are some characteristics of a Buddhist Vision for the Future.

A Buddhist Vision for the Future invariably implies that we look at every human being living as a brother/sister. The Buddhist Vision sees no distinction in caste, creed, colour, race, etc. All of us are human beings and accidents of birth have brought us into different creeds, castes, races, etc. What we need is a vision to surpass this narrow concept, which is today the cause of much strife. Problems in the country and problems in the world originate in our demarcation of human beings according to the birth, colour, creed, etc.

A Buddhist Vision goes further in establishing sympathy not only with all human beings but also with all living beings. s Whatever that has life is sacred to Buddhists and no one has the

right to deprive another of his/her life. We respect life whether it is of an animal or bird. The Vision goes even further in incorporating the environment into it. Trees, rivers, mountains and all aspects of nature are included in it.

Rights are extended not only to the humans buts are also extended to all including animals, birds, trees, plants, streams, etc. A Buddhist Vision includes the rights of all living beings be it human beings, animals, aspects of the environment, etc.

A Buddhist Vision is full of compassion. This comes from "understanding". When one "understands", compassion emerges naturally.A Buddhist Vision is valuable not because it arises from Buddhism, but because it safeguards the rights and privileges of all. It does not differentiate between people. A Buddhist Vision envisages a social framework where equality of all human beings is the basis whatever their creed, caste, ethnic group, etc.

These characteristics are implied by the discourse on Loving Kindness (*Karaniya Metta Sutta*), where the Buddha teaches us that those who are skilled and wish to attain that state of bliss (*Nibbana*) should be dexterous, upright, exceedingly upright, obedient, gentle, humble, contented, easily supportable, with but a few responsibilities, of simple livelihood, controlled in the senses, prudent, courteous and not hanker after associations with families. If you take these qualities as a measure you will agree with me that **Sir D.B. Jayatilaka** was truly a man who directed his life towards achieving perfect peace and happiness. Only a person of that resolve could develop an insight, discarding wrong views.

I would now like to state formally what I mean by a "vision". In this lecture what I mean by a vision is a state of dynamic consciousness directed towards achieving peace and happiness for one and all. This is a "*Dassana*" (an insight) and not a "*Ditthi*" (an ideology). (2) "*Dtthi*" or a dogmatic view could release a lot of destructive and negative energies. On the other hand a "*Dassana*" always liberates positive and constructive energies. Again in the discourse on Loving Kindness, Lord Buddha exhorts us to cultivate a boundless love towards all beings in the same way that a mother would protect her only child with her life. What better thought is there for the modern world to cultivate at this time of the greatest

crisis since man evolved on this earth.

A Buddhist vision for the future therefore should be founded on *Metta* or loving-kindness, some characteristics of which I have stated earlier. **Mahatma Gandhi**, the Apostle of nonviolence in the 20th century had a vision of a world where the well-being of all was at the centre of all human thought and action. He called this Sarvodaya, a compound word he coined from the two Sanskrit words *Sarvam* and *Udayam*. We in the Sarvodaya Movement of Sri Lanka, which originated four and a half decades ago, gave the word Sarvodaya a meaning in the spirit of the teachings of the Buddha. We interpreted the word *Udaya* as awakening and Sarvodaya is the Awakening of All. Buddha was the Awakened One. Those of us who follow him have taken to a path or a process of awakening which would one day help us to attain full enlightenment.

As I stated earlier my concept of a vision is based on a concept of "dynamic consciousness" and is also concerned with "all". It would be very useful at this point to submit to you what a modern scientist thinks of these. *Ervin Laszlo* in the Report of the Club of Budapest, **Third Millennium Challenge and the Vision** says *"In the emerging vision of science, matter, life, and mind are consistent elements within an overall process of great complexity yet coherent and harmonious design. Space and time are united as the dynamic background of the observable universe, matter is vanishing as a fundamental feature of reality, retreating before energy; and continuous fields are replacing discrete particles as the basic elements of an energy-bathecl universe. The universe is a seamless whole, evolving over eons of Cosmic time and producing conditions where life can emerge and then mind. Life is an intimate web of relations that evolves in its own right, interfacing and integrating its myriad diverse elements. The biosphere is born within the womb of the universe, and mind and consciousness are born in the womb of the biosphere. Nothing is independent of any other thing, harmonzy is pervasive.*

Our body is a part of the biosphere and it resonates with the web of life on this planet. Our mind is part of our body, in touch with other minds as well as the biosphere. This is the new vision, and it is powerful—as powerful as any myth of the past and more adapted to our times. It is also incomparably, more reliable, fruit

of careful observation and painstaking experiment."

"Peace and happiness for one and all" is dependent on all of us recognizing and accepting that we are all closely linked together. " Life is an intimate web of relations" as Laszlo states. Various diversities in human society based on ethnic, geographical, religious and political considerations have to be integrated into a vision of one world, one people. This is the Buddhist vision that is founded on the concepts of Metta (compassion towards all) and *paticca samuppada dhamma* (Law of dependent origination). With the scientific worldview that is coming to be accepted today universally, it is my view that we in Sri Lanka should play a pioneering role in promoting our own Buddhist Vision of compassion and interconnectedness. The biggest obstacles for the promotion of such a worldview are our own myths and illusions making us self-centered to the exclusion of the interests of others and the aggressive and tremendous utilization of modern communication technology to promote globalization by external international interests, which again is an expression of their self-interest to the exclusion of that of others.

Though the word "globalization" connotes the concept of universalism, looking deeper into the globalization process, we realize that they are promoting only economic globalization. The crux of the matter is that everything in the world, living and non living, including the human being, his life support systems, and all the progress made by human society in technology, social and political institutions, culture and religion have been commodified, so that like any other commodity they can be bought and sold in the global market without any restriction. This is even called progress towards global consciousness or the planetary village. We in the Asian region who are familiar with the notion of *Vasudaiva Kutumbhakam* - the whole world is one family - gets easily deceived by this commercial propagandist jargon mistaking it as the same as Matta.

We do not have to exert our minds too much to realize that this is only another neo-colonial way of using the inherent defilements in man, namely, greed (*lobha*) aversion (*Dvesha*) and delusion (*moha*) in an organized way to sell a product, whether it is useful or not, but simply to maximize profit.

The quality of the product is immaterial. What is more important to them is the label under which the product or the service is sold. Be it in the field of education, health, governance, art and culture or religion it is the brand that is sold without any consideration for the quality of what is offered. You drink Coco Cola or Pepsi Cola or eat *McDonald's* or *KFC*, not for their nutritive quality, but to conform to what our minds are conditioned for. To fit in with consumerist culture, new forms of commercialized Christianity, devoid of any spiritual content, registered as companies, are doing their business in our economically and socially depressed village communities.

Sir Baron's vision of religion, health, education and the economy was based on a worldview where human enlightenment was foremost in his mind. Therefore, when we think of a Buddhist Vision for the Future, we have to think of practical approaches to every problem and issue, human society is facing today and develop a comprehensive framework of thought that can be practically demonstrated from our society itself and which can be extended to the planetary society as a whole. It is a 21st century *Dhammadutha Mission*, which is founded on this Buddhist Vision, nonsectarian and universal in application that is needed today. This has to go beyond propagation of Buddha Dhamma as a philosophy or faith around the world. I am not underestimating the importance of Buddhist missionary work around the world to educate and enlighten people who know nothing about Buddha Dhamma. This should go on with increasing vigour. The cyber space that is utilized today to propagate all types of sectarian religious creeds, political ideologies and commercial brands and even pornography should be counteracted with the compassionate teachings of the Enlightened One for the good of the world. This effort should be encouraged and promoted. What I am proposing is a second field of applied Buddhism not only for the spiritual enlightenment but to promote moral, cultural, social, economic and political processes in the world, in conformity with the essence of Buddhist ethics, morality, concentration and wisdom.

We may be applying Buddha's teachings to our own individual lives which is of course of foremost importance. But how far are we from applying Buddhism to understand and solve our social

problems? My view of the present, which is very important from a Buddhist perspective, is that far from applying Buddhism, we are not even aware that there is a "Buddhism to be applied". Just one example would suffice. We are aware of the contribution made by **Sir D. B. Jayatilaka** to the temperance movement both in this country and internationally when he was in England. Today there is hardly an eating-place in this country, not taking into account multi-starred hotels, where alcoholic drinks are not freely available. Even in villages this wide spread vice has taken root in almost every other home and it is difficult to find even religious ceremonies where alcoholic drinks are not openly served. As a legislator while **Sir Baron** fought against the issuance of liquor licenses, today, the privilege of issuing liquor permits has become a ready source of income for many of our Honourable Members of Parliament! Sophisticated technology is being imported in order to kill animals for local consumption and export. Again we close our eyes to gambling as a source of income for the state. Where is Right Livelihood?

Education for all was very close to **Sir Baron's** heart. Not only at *Dharmaraja College* and at *Ananda College* but in hundreds of schools established by the Buddhist Theosophical society he excelled as a teacher, educationist and a creator of a truly Buddhist Educational system. He was the first to receive an LLD degree from the University of Ceylon because of the contribution he made to promote the establishment of University Education in Sri Lanka. Can we be satisfied with the philosophy, the content and the programmes of education that are conducted in our country? It is true that from the Kindergarten to the University our students can receive a free education. What is the kind of individual our society gets at the end of these students' educational career? Isn't there a serious breakdown in discipline among students? Perhaps this is a reflection of the moral degeneration of their adults.

Private schools and International schools mushrooming in the country, as a part of a globalized economic system, surely, is not the answer to the crisis in education. A society where education becomes a commodity, freely sold in the open market for the highest price, such a society is bound to degenerate and decay. The essence of education, to **Sir Baron** and all of us present here I am

sure, is not the acquisition of all kinds of skills but a process where human personality is assisted to awaken itself. "Awaken your insight, awaken your knowledge, awaken your wisdom, awaken the scientific path of knowing, and awaken the light in you", is how I would interpret Lord Buddha's "*Chakum Udapadi, Nanan Udapadi, Panna- Udapadi*, Vijja Udapadi, and Aloko Udapadi" in relation to the present educational crisis. Surely don't we have the capability to build up a system of education on these principles?

Look at the health situation in our country. While the public health system has progressed and the curative systems use advanced technology, we find that every hospital and dispensary is over crowded. This situation is not only found in government hospitals but also in private hospitals. I see two dangers here. Firstly medical care is fast becoming a privilege of a few who can pay and the poorer segments of our society cannot get that care. Thus medical care and health also are becoming a commodity in a multinational market. Secondly, hardly anybody is going into the root causes of ill health and spread of diseases. The contribution to ill-health and disease made by polluted air, unclean water, contaminated food and indiscriminate availability of drugs in the open market are ignored and those unscrupulous persons responsible for these are left alone. Mind and body are inter-related and one cannot exist without the other. The importance of a mind at "peace" in maintaining one's health appears to be totally ignored. We treat only the "body". The existence of a "*Citta Niyama*" appears to be confined to texts, sermons and discussions.

The majority of efficient teachers, qualified doctors, if we think only of education and health fields, have joined the rat race of a free market economy. The contribution they can make for a more enlightened and healthy society is lost sight of. When Sir. Jayatilleke passed away, he endowed to the nation, every thing that was left over from his endless philanthropic work, through the Public Trustee. How many of our rich people today have that magnanimity in a truly Buddhist philanthropic spirit to dedicate even a part of their earnings to uplift our spiritually declining people and economically backward communities? Why we don't have such people is, like most other material and non-material things in our society, we have privatized the teachings of the Buddha for our

own enlightenment in our own way and at our own speed. No wonder that even some of our respected Buddhist Monks help us to postpone our attainment of Nibbana to several lives into the future giving us time and space to enjoy the sojourns in heavens for sense gratification.

I already referred to Applied Buddhism. *Professor Sulak Sivaraksha* of Thailand identified Buddhist leaders, organizations and movements in the world and promoted what is known as Engaged Buddhism. In dozens of countries in the world there are Engaged Buddhists who make their presence felt in inter-religious dialogues, political conflicts, scenes of ethnic confrontations and violence, places of economic injustices? human-right violations and environmental matters. They confront injustices imposed on people by globalization and acts of multi national corporations. In other words frontiers of Buddhism are extended today to face all challenges pertaining to development and peace wherever they occur.

We who live in Sri Lanka, the birthplace of Sir Baron and other great Buddhist leaders, cannot remain silent and apathetic. We have to awaken ourselves to a Buddhist Vision for the Future without losing any more time and execute our responsibilities to our people and to the world by taking initiatives to change and transform our society. We cannot leave it to chance or fate. We cannot leave it in the hands of governments, political parties, generals, bureaucrats, technocrats, businessmen and even teachers, parents, professionals and priesthood. This initiative has to be taken by men and women as individuals who have a vision of planetary consciousness and interrelationship with every thing in nature. A Mahayana Buddhist may say, those who know they possess a *bodhicitta* and practice *bodhicharya* are the ones who take such bold initiatives.

The Sarvodaya Movement which we started over four decades ago is an initiative taken to implement A Buddhist Vision for the Future on the philosophy and principles I outlined so tar. The vision being essentially "a state of dynamic consciousness directed towards achieving peace and happiness for one and all", you will not be surprised that our vision implies the development of people. Hence the vision translates into an attempt to achieve the following objectives in relation to the human being and human society:

1. Total Human Personality Awakening *(Puma Paurushordaya)*
2. Awakening of the Family Unit *(Kutumbodaya)*
3. Awakening of the Village Community *(Gramodaya)*
4. Self-governance of the Village Community *(Grama-swara-jyava)*
5. Awakening of the Urban Community *(Nagarodaya)*
6. Self-governance of the Urban Community *(Nagara Swarajyaya)*
7. Awakening of the Nation *(Deshodaya)*
8. Awakening of the World Community *(Vishvodaya)*

To realize the above vision, the Movement has worked out a Philosophy, Principles, Programmes, Methodologies and Structures pertaining to each one of them while integrating all of these objectives with our Vision. Similarly at each of these levels we have developed what we call people's empowerment programmes and they function as specialized divisions providing for the following:

1. Spiritual Empowerment
2. Moral Empowerment
3. Cultural Empowerment
4. Social Empowerment
5. Economic Empowerment
6. Political Empowerment and
7. Technological Empowerment

Sarvodaya does not believe that future should be left to chance or fate or what others who perpetrate inequalities and injustices do. Our belief is in our ability and creativity to build the future we want. We do not believe in linear processes in time and space to determine what we should do but on the other hand we have put our faith in holistic evolutionary processes which we can create by lifting up ourselves to levels of higher consciousness.

We commenced this nonviolent revolutionary movement from our most backward village communities. The people in these villages, irrespective of the fact that they belonged to various castes, religious creeds, linguistic or racial groups, were able to feel and understand the message of the Compassionate One we were trying to communicate by offering our physical labour, knowledge and skills to work side by side with them to improve their conditions of living. When we told them that we came to ask for their help to awaken our own personalities on the lines of *metta* (loving-kindness), *karuna* (compassionate action), *muditha* (altruistic joy) and *upekkha* (equanimity) they understood our intentions. We also requested their help for us to learn the practice of *dana* or sharing of our resources and skills with them, *priya vacana* (the pleasant language), *arthacharya* (constructive activity) and *samanathmata* (equality in association). They readily responded.

When we continued our pilgrimage of love and service from village to village carrying the message of *Sathara Brahma Viharana*, the four sublime abodes and *Sathara Sangraha Vasthu,* four principles of community conduct according to Buddha's teachings, people realized that these ancient teachings have a practical relevance to modern society. This spirituocultural motivation awakened the village people as individuals, families and communities depending more and more on their own self-reliance, community participation and a scientific outlook to satisfy their basic needs. It is part of a Buddhist Vision to expect every person in the country to be given an opportunity to satisfy his or her basic needs. Through the satisfaction of these basic needs he or she could be motivated to awaken his/her personality. A Buddhist Vision ensures that irrespective of race, colour, caste, etc., every one should be given the opportunity to satisfy their basic needs.

A portfolio of basic needs comprising of A Beautiful and Healthy Physical and Psychological Environment, Adequate Supply of Water for Drinking and Agricultural Purposes, Simple Clothing Requirements, Housing, Healthcare, Energy Needs, Communication, Education, and Spiritual and Cultural Needs, soon became the targets to be achieved by village communities under their own community leadership.

In talking of basic needs one has to make some comments on

the "economy". We believe that the "economy", should in the first place, supply our basic needs. If you take the economies of most of the advanced countries as a model, you will agree with me that in those societies the meanings they attribute to rural society, agriculture and development are not the same as in our societies. In those societies, all these are integrated components of a technological environment which can even be called a technosphere. Our rural areas, with the intervention of globalization policies, are also slowly but steadily heading towards the creation of the same kind of an undesirable technosphere, though we are still in a position to slow down this trend.

In rich countries the vast majority of people both in their public and private life have become part of this technosphere so much, that they are fast losing their individual, family and community identities which were an integral part of human life. They work, and spend most of their daily life in something like a technological grid and find it extremely difficult to detach themselves as human beings from that system. The consequences of this kind of condition are disastrous for the peace and happiness of people. SO, today they are trying to discover ways and means of building a post industrial society where their previous spiritual, moral and sociocultural life could be revived. This is a very difficult task. On the other hand a community life, worth preserving, is still found in our rural areas. With regard to values and cultures, everything is not yet lost. Natural and social environment have been destroyed very much, but I would say not beyond redemption. We can and should evolve an "economy" of our own. We at Sarvodaya are laying a foundation for this, as I shall shortly refer to.

The Sarvodaya movement was pioneered by students and teachers of a Buddhist School, Nalanda College. Other educational institutions also joined this movement. Soon it became a popular peoples' movement where the message extended beyond schools. The educational bureaucrats were disturbed as we were taking students beyond their classroombased, examination-oriented, book-centered education. Some economists were perturbed that human labor, which for them was only a factor of production for which there was a price tag, was now becoming a non-monetized service. Their contention was the Shramadana Movement which

they saw as a free labour movement would aggravate the unemployment problem. Some monks were worried that sacred words like *metta, karuna, muditha and upekkha* were used in labor intensive activities such as construction of roads to villages, building wells, irrigation canals and tanks losing their sacredness. But to us this was and is "applying Buddhism" into social situations.

We always welcomed criticism but did not hesitate to point out to those educational bureaucrats that for us education for life, through life and throughout life, for the awakening of the human personality, was more important than the remnants of a colonial education which was designed to keep us enslaved to the colonial masters. Unlike to the Western trained economists, labor for us is more than a saleable factor of production. It is a sacred component of the human personality, which is put to use, both as an economic necessity and also as a creative expression. We explained to them that we do not believe in creating a full employment society but we do believe in the creation of a full engagement society - a society of Right Livelihood.

In 1 950's we started with a few villages. By 1967 Sarvodaya was active in one hundred villages. In 70's it reached the thousand-village target. In 90's we were working in over 10000 villages and today Sarvodaya has reached over 15000 Sinhala, Tamil and Muslim villages. Today in every district of Sri Lanka we have one or more district Sarvodaya Centres, in every Pradeshiya Sabha Division we have a Divisional Centre. We have specialized educational institutes for Meditation, Community Leadership Training for Buddhist monks, agriculture and several other vocations. Sarvodaya Economic Enterprises Development Services Division has practically demonstrated in over 5000 villages in the country that an alternative economic and financial system based on ethical principles is quite practicable in the 21 st Century of Globalization. We call our Economic Science, *Artha Dharma Vidya*—Economics with an Ethical Foundation.

The system of governance in our country is a mockery of democracy. The party political system is based on *Sathara Agathi*, namely, *chanda, dvesha, bhaya* and *moha*. The root cause of the present political degeneration, ethnic conflicts, the civil war, poverty, corruption, environmental degradation, crimes and vio-

lence and lawlessness, is this system of party politics. Sarvodaya's answer to this menace is what is called Deshodaya, National Awakening based on consensual, people's participatory politics. The Buddhist vision of a country ruled by *Dasaraja Dharma* or ten principles of good governance can easily be realized if we adopt the Deshodaya programme that is being offered to the Nation by Sarvodaya. This is on the same lines as the ancient Buddhist Republics of Lichchavis and Vajjis and Mahathma Gandhi's concept of village republics. I am not elaborating on either the Economic or the Political Agenda of this Vision further due to time constraints except to mention some salient features.

Buddhist teachings pay respect to seven democratic principles, which are known as "*Sapta Aparihaniya Dharma*". The country should be administered according to these seven principles. These are not borrowed from anywhere else. In the first it is said that the rulers should meet frequently and discuss. In such meetings every action and discussion is to be carried out in unity. They should meet together, discuss together. Of course one is reminded here of the four principles of sharing, pleasant speech, proactive activities and equality. Associated with these are compassion, sympathy, altruistic joy and equanimity. The latter deal with the condition of the mind while the former are concerned with external action.

No new laws should be enacted arbitrarily, while laws promulgated should be put into action. The laws are to be established considering their impact on society. Whatever laws promulgated need to be translated into action. No laws remain in abeyance or being not put into action.

The respect paid to elders, learned and seniors is important. It is this, which keeps the traditions going. The new generation is bound to the old generation by way of respect paid to elders and seniors.

Weaker sections of society need protection. Girls and women have been identified as needing special protection. They should not be abducted, molested, raped or subjected to any other form of violence. Their rights and privileges should not be taken away from them. A true democratic government thus protects such weaker sections. This principle could be extended further to cover all weaker groups—economic or social.

Respect paid to religious teachers, religions and learned people is emphasized. All religions are considered equal. Religious tolerance is a part of the vision of a Buddhist. We have an example of a monarch who put these principles into practice, namely, Asoka or as he is more commonly referred to Dharmasoka.

These seven principles advocated by the Buddha were put into practice by King Asoka. He says, " All men are my children. What I desire for my children - and I desire their welfare and happiness, both in this world and the next - that I desire for other men." Asoka wanted people, irrespective of their colour, caste, creed or ethnic group to remain without fear. Asoka treated not: only the Buddhist Sangha but men of all religions with equal respect.

A Buddhist Vision puts all that is said into practice. Even here the example of Asoka could be seen. Morality was based on right living. Respect for life was considered the cornerstone of this philosophy. Injustice, cruel or harsh treatment were avoided.

Our rulers should take note of Asoka's example. Asoka as a ruler was available to the people at all times. " At any time, whether I am eating, in the women's quarters, the bed chamber, the chariot, the palanquin, in the park or wherever, reporters are to be posted, with instructions to report to me the affairs of the people, so that I might attend to those affairs wherever I am," (Rock Edict 6)

The hallmark of a good government is in the ability of the people to place their problems before the ruler. A Buddhist Vision of a democracy expects the democratic principles of dissension and tolerance to be practiced. In life and also in political deliberations, the rulers or decision-makers are like the wheels of a cart, taking all the trouble to turn, while the people ride safely in the cart.

Even in the case of male and female no superiority for the male is expected. The Buddha at the time when his foster mother was about to pass away addressed her in the following words, " Oh Gotami, perform a miracle in order to dispel the wrong views of those foolish men who are in doubt with regard to the spiritual attainment of women".

These words are a testament to the equality enjoyed by women in Buddhism. The Buddha pointed out clearly that women had a

dignified and an important part to play in society, and he defined it with great insight, fitting her harmoniously into the social fabric. She is a lovable member of the household, held in place by numerous relationships and respected.

Deshodaya programme started very recently by Sarvodaya is our practical approach to move towards a political system with characteristics as outlined above. The essence of Deshodaya is the real exercise of power by relatively small rural and urban communities through the selection of community-level representatives well-known to and respected by the communities and answerable directly to the communities themselves. Every community in our country knows who the "good and "able" people are. They also know who are the rogues, thugs and drunkards, etc. These qualities are not related to birth and wealth. It is by "action" alone that a community judges its members though the present party political system does not allow people to exercise their judgement in the selection of those who are to represent them. A Buddhist Vision for the Future has to create the conditions for these dormant and not-yet-lost values of the people to emerge and function.

We believe that each community should be allowed to make certain decisions which affect their lives and further that they should be able to implement these decisions through structures over which they have a control. Sarvodaya can give several practical examples of this. Thousands of village communities have organized their own pre-school. They decide who should run the pre-school, when it should be closed and opened and what should be done within the pre-school. It is a structure serving the community and being maintained by the community. Thousands of villages have organized their own savings and credit schemes and Village Development Banks. They decide what loans to give and when. They decide what to do with their profit. They decide who manages the scheme. We at Sarvodaya provide the training and the technical back-up services. But the savings and credit scheme is theirs. They democratically control and manage their own affairs, in the spirit of *Grama Swarajya* or village self-government.

Under Deshodaya we are expecting to expand the decision-making area of the communities so that it covers all areas of their life. Should not a community have a say in the school which edu-

cates their children? Should the school be the only center of learning in community? Should the school cater only to children? How should the total land be utilized? These are all very relevant questions in the "development" of a community. We believe that the community should have a say in its "development". Sarvodaya is not going to give answers to such questions. We believe in educating the community so that it may understand and solve its own problems which of course and quite often requires resources from outside.

You may well ask at this point, "What about the divisional, district and national levels?" The communitylevel representatives selected by each community on the basis of their personal knowledge of and assessment of the persons, will select from among themselves a group to work at the divisional level and so on until the national level is reached. Therefore, at each level are representatives answerable directly to their communities. In the system we propose, a community may recall their representative if he/she does not perform as expected at any point of time. There is no question of waiting for the next "election".

I do not have the time to go into detail here but we have provided for the national-level representatives to be complemented by a set of representatives from civil society organizations operating at a national level. We have also provided for the learned and experienced people in the country, respected by the entire country, to participate in this consensual politics. They will not have to engage in "dirty politics" to serve their country. As in all other Sarvodaya work, this involves the education of the people about Deshodaya and how they may participate in it. I am greatly heartened by the many learned people who have offered to assist in this national endeavour entirely on a voluntary basis.

We believe that under Deshodaya there will be lasting peace and harmony in the country. But at the moment we have war and violence. We have to deal with the present in terms of a vision for the future and also considering what has taken place in the past. Allow me, therefore, to refer to the war and peace situation in our country which most people call the ethnic problem. Such labels are a great barrier to gaining an understanding of the situation we are in and in attempting to move towards a more favourable situation.

Coming back to events in the recent past, we believe that what has happened has been primarily due to a lack of *Metta.* In our collective consciousness we divided ourselves into various groups on the basis of religion, language, caste, etc. We got into thinking of "we" and " ours" and "they" and "theirs". We have to change this collective consciousness into one more in tune with "*Mettanca Sabba Lokasmin"* and "*Sabbe Satta Bhavantu Sukhitatta*" Until a substantial proportion of our population have their consciousness attuned in such a manner, there will be no real peace in our country. No amount of agreements between various parties will ensure lasting peace until the people as a whole put the emphasis on our common humanity and not on our cultural, political and other differences.

In Sarvodaya, for the past few years, we have been making a very serious effort through our "Peace Meditation Programmes" conducted in various parts of the country to make such a change in the consciousness of our people. People of all religions and religious leaders of all faiths have participated in these programmes. The participants in these programmes have numbered from a few thousands to well over three lakhs of people. On the 15th of next month, March 2002, we expect to conduct a "Peace Meditation" programme in which we expect the participation of more than 500000 people including representatives from the North and the East. This meditation programme will be in the sacred city of Anuradhapura. From these mass meditational programmes we expect to create a 'critical mass' of spiritual consciousness in our country. We have already made good progress.

There is also another very important aspect to be considered in moving towards peace and harmony. In a Buddhist Vision, the understanding of the other man's point of view is vital. There are various ways of looking at problems. Unless and until we see problems from the eyes of the other men, we will not understand them. Nor will divergent views be appreciated. Nor will conflicts end. Appreciating the other man's view could solve even the present problems we have.

The hallmark of happy lives is sacrifice. A family to be a unit should have a father and a mother who are ready to sacrifice. A community would thrive when sacrifice becomes the keynote in its

collective activity. Even in the case of conflicts one is confronted with, what is necessary may be a sacrifice. If we are to bring the present conflict between the Government and the LTTE to an end. sacrifice is necessary from both parties. The Government as the vital party to resolve the conflict, should sacrifice more. Greater the sacrifice, greater is the trust created and the satisfaction generated.

Let us look at our current situation from another Buddhist perspective to which I have briefly referred earlier. It is fruitful and indeed behoves us as Buddhists to look at the situation from the perspective of Dependent Origination or This/That Conditionality as it is some times referred to. This principle indicates to us that while past events have their influence on the present, the future is not entirely dependent on the past. The future is determined not only by the past but also by what we do at present. In modern terminology, This/That Conditionality refers to non-linear systems. The following quotation is an illustration of current thinking.

The Buddha expressed this/that conditionality in a simple looking formula:

(1) When this is, that is.
(2) From the arising of this comes the arising of that.
(3) When this isn't, that isn't.
(4) From the stopping of this comes the stopping of that"

There are many possible ways of interpreting this formula, but only one does justice troth to the way the formula is worded and to the complex, fluid manner in which specific examples of causal relationships are described in the Canon. That way is to view the formula as the interplay of two causal principles, one linear and the other synchronic, that combine to form a nonlinear pattern. The linear principle—taking (2) and (4) as a pair—connects events, rather than objects, over time; the synchronic principle—(1) and (3)—connects objects and event in the present moment. The two principles interact, so that any given event is influenced by two sets of conditions input acting from the past and input acting from the present. Although each principle seems simple, the fact that they interact makes their consequences very complex. [Thanissaro Bhikku (Geoffrey DeGraff) The Wings to Awakening: An Anthology from the Pali Canon. Barre, Massachusetts: Dhamma Dana Publications, Barre Centre for Buddhist Studies.1996. pp.10,11]

One major lesson we learn from *Paticca Samuppada* is that no event arises from a single cause. There are a multiplicity of causes. There are many inputs into the current situation. While we believe in the supremacy of the mind, and the need to change our collective consciousness, we are also very mindful of the other factors which impinge on the current situation. Our analysis of the current situation, the underlying causes of the current situation, the way to remove the causes and the characteristics of the situation we hope to achieve have been presented in " The Sarvodaya Peace Action Plan" from which I now quote.

TEN BASIC CONDITIONS FOR A CEASE-FIRE

We acknowledge that every part of Sri Lanka belongs to every Sri Lankan, regardless of race, ethnicity, color, religion, culture, language, class or sex. Every Sri Lankan must respect the differences of others. Based on this acknowledgment, every Sri Lankan must guarantee for all Sri Lankans:

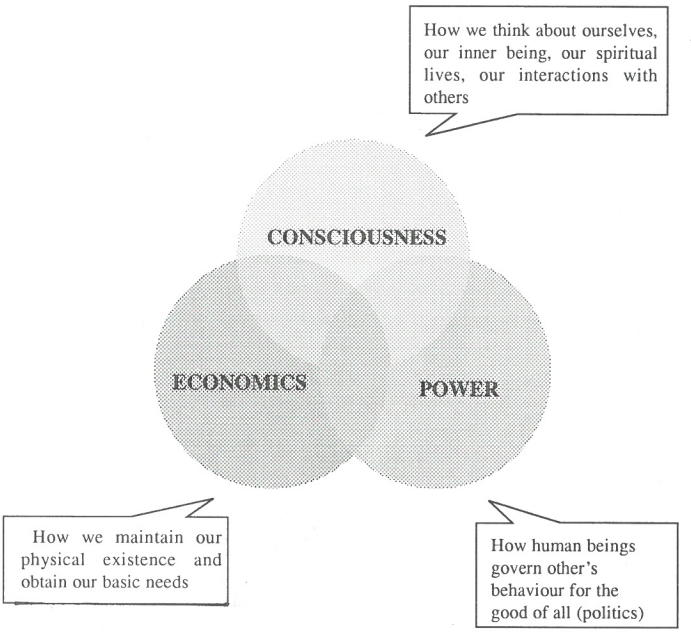
1. Guarantee safety of all citizens everywhere (freedom from fear).
2. Guarantee freedom from summary execution, torture, terror and humiliation.
3. Guarantee free movement of all people everywhere (the right to travel).
4. Guarantee freedom of ideas, information and political expression (democracy).
5. Guarantee freedom of religious and spiritual expression.
6. Guarantee freedom and equality of culture, language and creative expression.
7. Guarantee respect for the persons and property of all citizens.
8. Guarantee non-interference with work and the opportunity for right livelihood.
9. Guarantee democratic and non-violent participation in governance.
10. Guarantee the right of self-determination of every individual and community.

What our Action Plan indicates is our belief, inherent in a Buddhist Vision, that action in only one domain is not adequate. For ease of understanding and communication to the people, the very complex situation with its multitude of factors, has been interpreted

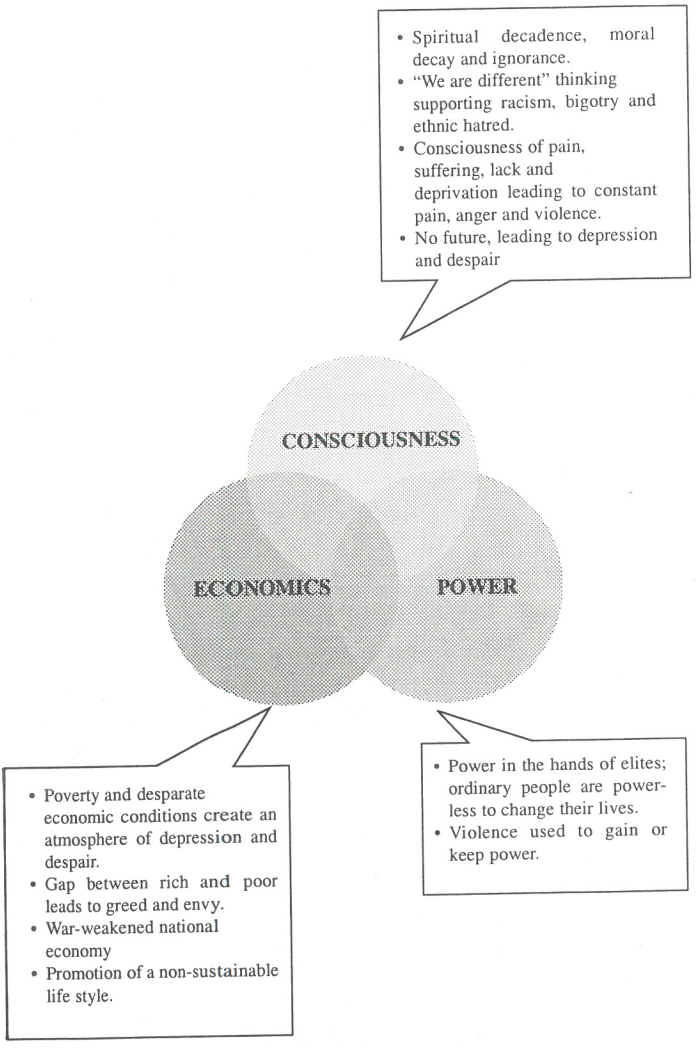
THE ACTION PLAN: STEPS TO PEACE

The Sarvodaya Approach to Ending Conflict

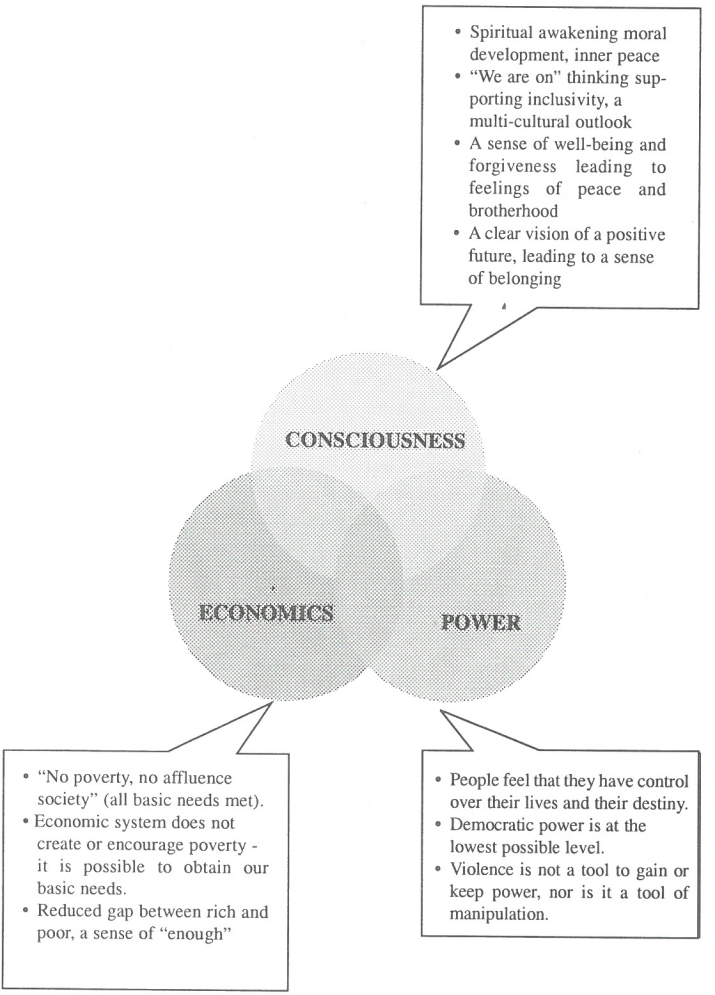
1. There are three basic elements that combine to create a society



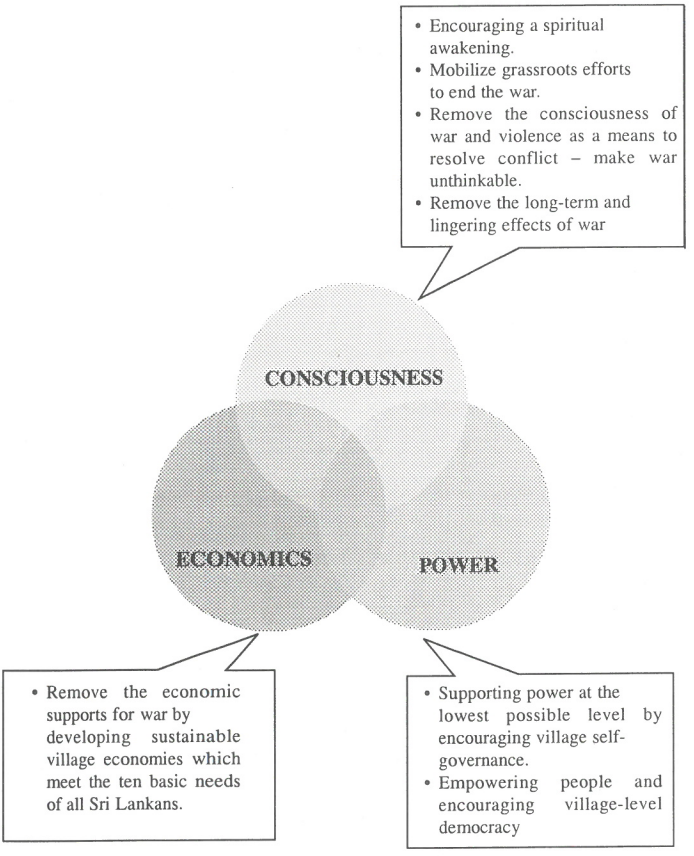
2. War and violence are fueled by the interplay of these three factors:



3. On the other hand, the same three elements can combine to create a healthy, dynamic society.



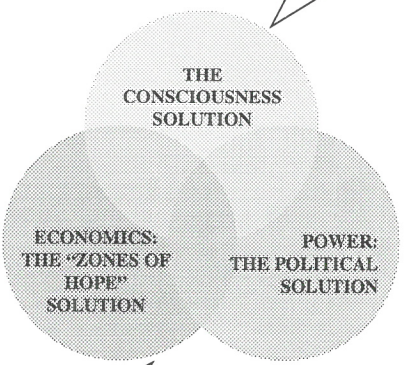
4. Sarvodaya's goal: to end the war in Sri Lanka and to end the spiritual, economic, social and political conditions that lead to war and violence..



IMMEDIATE STEPS

Goal: Involve 2,000,000 Sri Lankans in peace activities and peace awarness:

- Peace meditations
- Dissemination of Sarvodaya Peace Plan
- Cross-cultural dialogue activities
- Emotional shramadana
- Amity camps
- Women's Peace Strategy
- Mutual exchanges
- Cultural, arts and spiritual activities.



Goal: End the attraction of war and violence by creating and implementing a development strategy for the mos economically hard-pressed areas of Sri Lanka:

- Research Dry Zones Development Strategy
- Accelerated village banking in North and East
- Focussing and expanding Sarvodaya activities in North and East.

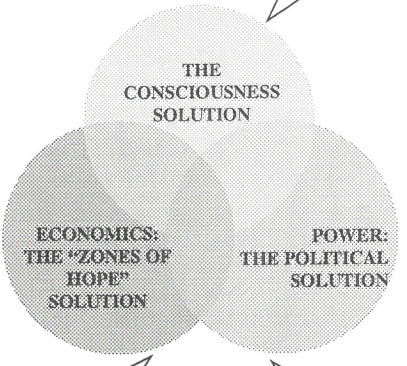
Goal: Self-determination at the village level:

- Facilitate local democratic action
- Establish local human rights monitors
- Develop village self-reliance

MID-TERM ACTIONS

Goal: Encourage and participate in a formal end to the war in Sri Lanka; begin the long-term healing process.

- Total Sarvodaya peace mobilization
- Dialogue on peace with all parties
- Rapid Deployment Force for Peace
- Media for Peace
- Trauma and Counseling Center
- Peace Resource Center



Goal: Implement "Zones of Hope" development strategy and a "no poverty, no affluence" economic system in test villages

- Implement Dry Zones Development Strategy
- Create "Right Livelihood" economic system
- Reduce disparity between rich and poor.

Goals: Expand village self-determination; develop a "People's Constitution"

- Village level dialogue on constitutional reform
- Develop the "People's Constitution"
- Facilitate a national conference on the future of Sri Lanka
- Develop village self-governance

in terms of three significant areas for action: Consciousness, the Economy and Power. In the area of transforming consciousness we have launched the *Sama Bhavana* (Peace Meditation) programme. In the field of economics an *Artha Dharma Vidya* programme is functioning in several thousand villages. The *Grama Swarajya Deshodaya* programme is in the area of power. Changes have to be made in all these domains in a simultaneous, integrated and comprehensive manner. Such changes are very slow to begin with. But we believe that as more and more people are affected positively by these changes, they will gather momentum and usher an era of lasting peace, harmony and prosperity in our beloved country.

Perhaps it is those who are away from us and not immersed in our differences, who see the worth of what we are heirs to. Let me end my talk with the concluding paragraph in the Epilogue of Prof Johan Galtung's book **Buddhism: A Quest for Unity and Peace:**

"The world needs Buddhist ethics in the struggle to create peace, and not only among human beings, but also with nature ~ a very strong point in Buddhism. But Buddhism has to confront the real world issues relevant for peace and enter the struggle—also when that struggle is political. There is no acceptable way of staying permanently outside that struggle. And Buddhism has so much to contribute! Above all Buddhism sends a message of unity, of all, with all. A very strong base for peace, indeed".

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13.02.2002

VIIITH NUREMBERG FORUM

PRESERVATION, DEVELOPMENT AND RECONCILIATION IN THE WORK OF THE SARVODAYA MOVEMENT

Thank you very much, Prof. Dr. Johannes Laehnemann and leaders of the VIIIth Nuremberg Forum, for inviting me once again for this very stimulating meeting of internationally known philosophers and intellectuals. I come to learn from you and not to teach you. As a person working with village level people, all I can do is to tell you what we are doing in over 15,000 villages in my country to transform our lives for the better while also trying to change the consciousness, the economy and the power structure in my country and the world as far as they affect our lives.

I will attempt to speak on the subject given to me, namely, **Preservation, Development and Reconciliation in the work of the Sarvodaya Movement**. I think for the benefit of those who did not listen to me at the VIIth Nuremberg Forum or the previous ones, I should give a brief introduction of the Sarvodaya Movement before I go to the subject proper.

Sarvodaya is a people's movement in Sri Lanka started 45 years ago. It is active in over 15,000 village communities in the country. Sarvodaya means to awaken all. We call people to share their labour, skills, knowledge and other resources to awaken all. This kind of sharing is known as Shramadana. Therefore, the Movement is also popularly called the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement of Sri Lanka.

In all the villages, which join the Movement, we inspire, encourage and organize the community to select basic human needs that have to be satisfied and then launch on a programme which can be implemented principally with their own labour, skills and other resources that can be mobilized on their own. Thus, the foundations on which this Movement was built were Self-Reliance, Community Participation and a Spiritual and Scientific outlook. The village level Sarvodaya Shramadana Societies, thus organized

and incorporated, continuously engage themselves in what is known as the **Ten Basic Human Needs Satisfaction Programme.** Most of the infrastructural work pertaining to their Environmental protection, Water, Health and Sanitation, Shelter, Communication, Energy, Education, Spiritual and Cultural needs and so on are achieved in this way.

These villages are networked as clusters of ten so that they can help one another by sharing labour and other resources. Village clusters themselves are linked to Sarvodaya Divisional Centres, about 345 in all, covering the whole country. These divisional centres are linked to 34 District Centres, which work closely with the Sarvodaya National and International Headquarters. These centres have specialized services in all fields concerning development, welfare, peace, reconciliation and advocacy, provide the knowledge and technological skills to divisions, clusters and villages when requested. Wherever and whenever we can get the co-operation of the government, other non-governmental organizations, UN and other international bodies we do so as long as they fall in line with our development philosophy and principles.

We have sustained this alternative development model for over four decades now. We have preserved the Movement in spite of shortage of funds, opposition and harassment from vested interests in the government, private and even religious sectors as well as envious, so-called intellectuals who despise anything indigenous. We could withstand these destructive elements because of the strong people's participatory base we had established over a long period of time. Our integrated approach of working simultaneously in spiritual, moral, cultural and social fields as a prerequisite to economic and political transformation has paid dividends.

In the economic sector we steadily built up an alternative model beginning with the village communities and spreading horizontally and then progressively impacting on higher and higher levels of the economy. This development was carried out over a period of fifteen years and the specialized and independent Sarvodaya Unit handling this was named **SEEDS** - Sarvodaya Economic Enterprise Development Services (Guarantee) Limited. It is incorporated as a non-profit, private limited liability company fully owned by Sarvodaya. A professional staff of about 500 is employed

in this company function from District Offices and their own Headquarters located close to the Sarvodaya Head Office.

They have three principal divisions - that is, (1) Banking, Savings and Credit, (2) Entrepreneurship Development and (3) Training. SEEDS has developed itself now to be the largest micro-credit institution in the country reaching the poorest segments in the population.

As articulated in its Annual Report, SEEDS defines its Core Values as follows:

> "We, at SEEDS, are envisioned by a society of awakening individuals, families and communities encompassing an awakening nation, where as the human mind is being healed, so is human society and the environment.

We hold to the Sarvodaya concept of a full-engagement, no-poverty society and subscribe to the following Guiding Principles laid down by the Founder of the Sarvodaya Movement, to transform SEEDS into an alternative development institution".

* SEEDS engages in activities that sustain socio-cultural values in society.
* SEEDS develops the society as a whole, not a "rich few".
* SEEDS encourages economic activities, which will not impact adversely on the environment."

Furthermore, it states that:

"SEEDS not only ensures a higher level of income among its clientele, but builds up their capacity and entrepreneurial skills, translated into better housing and improved lifestyles."

As at 30 June 2003, SEEDS has been able to establish over 820 Village Development Banks, which are sustainable grassroot level institutions democratically managed by the people. It has initiated and supported the infrastructure of economically active village based societies, facilitating the growth of a rural capital base of over Rs. 1.514 billion.

Being a credit partner of some state-sponsored development projects as well as those funded by donor agencies, SEEDS has

been able to extend credit facilities to the value of Rs. 6.498 billion to its client members.

We have coined a new word for the economic theory we are experimenting with through SEEDS. It is called Artha Dharma Vidya which literally means Economic Science with an Ethical Foundation. I do not have to give reasons for Sarvodaya rejecting all the unethical practices of modern economic systems which work only for a few. We know how difficult it is to go against the current. Yet we go ahead with all the courage we can muster.

As we know, the three basic elements needed to create a society are the economic, political and cultural-spiritual. (We should only keep in mind that we divide Life into these spheres for study, and this is not reality - which in reality is not compartmentalized. These aspects are inter-tangled, inter-dependent, and influence each other). As to the Economy, we talk about how we maintain our physical existence and how we produce goods and services and distribute them in the society; in Politics, the ways and means of how we make decisions and execute them; and in the Cultural Spiritual area, the nature of our inner being how we think about ourselves, the way we make our relationships with our own selves, with each other and with the environment. But, we have to face the fact that behind any of our choices in economics or politics lies the spiritual-cultural question: What are we?

In the pre-colonial setting, most of our life experience has been influenced by two power dimensions contradicting each other. At the 'vertical level' we happened to be subjects of a hierarchical system of a Feudal State; and there, we were not participants in decision-making, so we were not grown with the capacity to *act*. We learned only to *re-act*, we were assigned with specific locations in the society without any freedom of 'moving socially' as members of a caste society. These oppressive conditions inculcated into us many negative traits making us self-centered and selfish, while making us oppressors and oppressed at the same time.

But this is not all. On the other level that is at the 'horizontal level' of social life we were members of a (village) community. Here, we learned to share and care, to help and respect each other, to form consensus among members and to take decisions and act

collectively for the well being of the community. This has been our 'life axis', which saved us as human beings. Both these axes existed together, fused with each other in a very complicated manner, shaping our life in a very complex and contradictory way. Poison against our humanity produced at one level has been neutralized by the other level life. From the spiritual sickness produced at one level, we were healed by the other axis, the axis of collective life. Thus, there was a balance, so to speak.

Personal and family life as well as all the institutional processes and structures could not escape from and be above this great contradiction of life. Even the Sangha (community of monks) experienced the same hidden dilemma. Structures of the Sangha society at one level, in its own way, closely reflected the oppressive, hierarchical set up of the larger society in contrast to the Buddha's vision of the Sangha as a model of a Universal Egalitarian Society, which was supposed to be, in terms of power (or rather non-power?), a federation of self-governing communes actualizing "beautiful friendship (*kalyana mittata*) and companionship."

So the elite strata of the Sangha, at one level functioned as even guardians of the oppressive, spiritually degrading, feudal power axis. But, at the village level, the temple and the monk has been the embodiment of loving-kindness, compassion and wisdom, while being at the centre of community life. To use a term coined by Prof. Sulak Sivaraksha here, we see a contrast between Buddhism with a capital 'B', and buddhism with a simple 'b'.

At one point in our history, if we were not destined to become colonial subjects, *modenity* would have meant to us a process of weakening or demolishing of the vertical, oppressive axis of social and political life and the strengthening of the horizontal, life-giving axis. But that was not the fate that awaited us as a nation. Colonialism has had a different plan. Overall, what it did was to give more strength to the vertical axis, adjusting and at times, reshaping it a little bit to suit its own power needs. The horizontal dimension of collectiveness began to be eroded. Now, the post-colonial political processes, hand in-hand with the liberalised economy and globalisation, if they have not already had pulled down completely to ruin, the horizontal dimension of social life, are busi-

ly eroding it, while further strengthening the vertical power axis. Whoever be the political parties in power under this post-colonial political system fused with the liberalised economy, people at large have been and are being dominated by the political and economic power of those at the top, supported by the elite minority who benefit materially from the current status of affairs.

Political and economic decision-making is a top-down process with the people at the bottom having hardly any say. This trend for dominance of the top-down decision-making is not only being supported but is also being actively encouraged and harnessed by the multi-national corporations, international financial institutions and in general, by the agencies of globalisation.

The people are becoming poorer both materially and spiritually. The consumerism promoted by economic policies and supported extensively by the proliferating electronic mass media are making severe inroads into the traditional values of our people to such an extent, that even hallowed, religious events are now "consumer fairs" or "carnivals". The culture and value system which led to this country being named as the "Land of Prosperity and Righteousness" is being replaced with a value system where only "money and power (violence)" counts.

While the people at large are vaguely aware of the increasing dominance of their lives by those with political and the accompanying economic power and moan the erosion of their traditional cultural and spiritual values, and are strongly opposed to the increasing violence in public life, they see not viable alternative to the current political / economic system.

But we firmly believe that people have all the power, capacity and creativity to change the scenario. What they lack is the knowledge and a movement / campaign to muster their collective will. Here, as we see it, the foremost challenge lies not so much in the political or economic lines but in the cultural-spiritual. This is about bringing back the lost ethical foundations to the individual, family and community life. It demands a change in the spiritual core that is essential to build a healthy, human collective life, breaking away from the experience of being a herd of egoistic "consumers in the era of a liberalized economy" and post-colonial subjects.

Sarvodaya, from the very beginning, has adopted the "consciousness solution" to the development question. This broad frame of vision made possible for us to bring in some new approaches of cultural-spiritual transformation into the Movement's, especially to the Deshodaya Initiative's education work. Before going further, let me at this point briefly give you some basic information about Deshodaya.

Deshodaya has been launched by the Sarvodaya Movement as the next phase of *empowering people*. In the Sarvodaya philosophy and practice, empowering people commences with their *Personality Awakening*, followed by *Family Awakening* leading to *Village Awakening*. An invariable principle in this process is that people decide for themselves and implement their decisions by themselves as far as is practically possible. Such decision-making and implementation have so far been confined, very largely, though not exclusively, within families and communities. Deshodaya implies the continuation and deepening of such work enhanced by a new initiative to build *power alliance between and among communities* and expanded by intra and inter community activities in new fields.

Deshodaya is dedicated to the launching of a *People's Movement* leading to the establishment of a system of *consensual politics* under which, the people - in particular, the rural and urban poor - will accept the responsibility for building a new political culture characterized by *non-violence, transparency, good governance and direct participation of the people* leading to the meeting of *basic human needs* and the enjoyment of *fundamental human rights* by all, now and in the future.

Deshodaya envisages a system of independent village / urban communities working in concert with each other. Communities will support each other not so much materially or financially, but in their concerted actions to create a new political culture. Modern communication technology will be used to establish links with villages and communities not only locally but also internationally.

Deshodaya is a power project aiming to build a new political culture, which has two main features: non-violent methods of action and full and direct participation of people in decision-mak-

ing. This political culture does not have objectives other than to meet basic material as well as non-material needs of the people, guarantee basic human rights while ensuring the sustainable development of life.

It is clear that a full participatory political system may be established only by basing it on a relatively small unit of power. When one considers the theoretical, historical, sociological, cultural and geographical aspects of the problem, one comes to the conclusion that the *village* in Sri Lanka is the best unit to be regarded as the primary unit of power.

1. *Gramaswaraj* (Village Self-governance) is a consensual power unit, which has to be established by the people themselves through a nonviolent and consensual political process and then run its affairs through the same method.

2. A Gramaswaraj is characterised by all the basic attributes and processes that define a State, viz. *decision-making, executing* and *monitoring features*.

3. People, as individuals and families (and then as a village) have to face the top-down political-economic processes in isolation. Their life is being atomized and alienated, and it seems that they do not have any other option but to become greedy, egoistic individuals, if they are to survive in the rat race. But people in a Gramaswaraj will have all the spiritual and political capacity to confront these dominant processes on their own terms without being seriously affected by them, and to break the dynamics of these processes, while building alternatives according to the formula, "*Bahujana Hithaya, Bahujana Sukhaya - For the benefit and well-being of the many* ."

4. A Gramaswaraj will not be an isolated power unit. While enjoying the autonomy to run the affairs of its community on its own terms, a Gramaswaraj will voluntarily, for its own and common benefit, form a (**horizontal**) *power alliance* with other such entities forming a functioning network of Gramaswarajs.

5. Therefore, political-social and cultural energy emanating from one Gramaswaraj will not merely reflect the sum total of natural and human resources of the given village, but all the energies of the network will be reflected in one unit – demonstrating the so-called **synergy effect**.

To give you a more comprehensive idea of our vision, let me now talk briefly on what we can expect from this spiritual economic-political campaign.

1. It is envisaged in the overall and in the long run, that the proposed facilitating network building and education programme of Deshodaya will start to set in motion unprecedented deep social-political and cultural processes within the Sri Lankan society that will eventually change the nature of the post-colonial (centralized, elitist, authoritarian, hierarchical) state in a radical way, so as to make it a federation of self-governed (village) communities. In this federation of self-governed communities, Grama-Swarajaya will be the basic unit. This basic unit and its people possess all power. They delegate such power to the upper units as are required by them to discharge their duties.

With the strengthening of Grama Swarajyas and spreading of the network across the country, democratic norms will be established deeper and frmer in all sectors / institutions of social life; political, economic, cultural as well as family, village, community and upper units of power. In a mature phase of the awakening process, people are to be the real and direct authors of their own life and destiny. It also may be envisaged that the socio-political and cultural-ethical setting to be blossomed in the Grama Swarajyas, will eventually turn the tide of migration from village to town.

2. Thus, the proposed 2-year programme is to be regarded as the first humble but concrete step towards a Great Renaissance in Sri Lanka. It may be envisaged that by the end of the period, people in at least 75 percent of the selected 1000 villages will form a new consensus among themselves and demonstrate a clear determination to establish a Grama Swarajya in their respective villages. This decision of

village communities will be practically realized either by - (a) setting up new governing structures at village level, viz. Grama Swarajya Mandala (Councils) - a new form of elected governing bodies, which will comprise organic leaders / representatives in the community; or (b) by restructuring and strengthening existing various organisational structures such as Sarvodaya Shramadana Societies into Grama Swarajya Mandalas.

3. Each village and cluster of villages will establish data banks and communication systems that will support the work of the Grama Swarajya Mandala.

4. The envisaged Grama Swarajya Mandalas will have adequate knowledge, skills and confidence to chart the development agenda of respective villages in order to furfill the basic needs and rights of the people of the respective communities, and to pursue its cause in practical terms in association and in collaboration with the growing and strengthening network of Grama Swarajyas and the Deshodaya National Movement, as well as with other civil society organizations, which will come forward in solidarity. It is also expected that there will be few percent of pioneering cases of leading Grama Swarajyas whose example and experience will greatly inspire and influence other villages (even out of the selected list) to follow suit.

5. By the end of the term, it is also envisaged that the experience of the awakening Grama Swarajya will give a strong impetus to a radically new political discourse at national level and the present demoralization of the people at large, will see to an end making possible to form a new political will and organize effective campaigns among them for change.

6. Factors will be emerging to ensure that a large proportion of the daily and common needs of life - food, shelter, health, education and recreation are met within the community or within the closer cluster of communities in the Grama Swarajya network.

7. Anti-social elements and negative practices (for instance, drug abuse, alcoholism, etc.) are checked by convention and popular will realized in various organisational structures (viz. youth council, mother's forum, etc.) and by expertise found within the village (viz. medical councils, councils of farmers, etc.) or within the cluster of villages. In the same vein, positive / new practices and initiatives in both public and professional life will be encouraged and promoted. A new kind of people's heroes, not acknowledged and promoted by the present system, whose innovative approaches and skills serve exclusively the collective well being, will emerge within the network.

8. It is our strong belief that lasting peace and reconciliation and a sustainable development in our country can be realized by an integrated, people centred approach of this nature. It is a long and painful process but dedicating one's life for a noble cause like this is a worthwhile sacrifice for the good of not only our country but for the entire living world.

This lecture deliverd by Dr. A.T. Ariyaratne on Preservation, Development and Reconciliation in the work of the Sarvodaya Movement at VIIIth Nuremberg Forum on 23rd-26th September 2003.

FIRST E A WIJESURIYA MEMORIAL ORATION

BUDDHIST EDUCATION MADE THE BRIGHTER BY MAHINDA COLLEGE

First of all, I offer my heartfelt gratitude to the Colombo Branch of the Mahinda College Old Boys' Association for inviting me to deliver the first E. A. Wijesuriya Memorial Oration on Buddhist Education.

I accepted this invitation knowing fully well that I lack the professional wisdom to give an academic lecture on Buddhist Education. In this audience itself there are professionals who are more learned on this topic than I. I undertook this task, regarding it as an opportunity for me to pay my respects to my beloved teacher Mr. Edgar Albert Wijesuriya whose unparalleled influence on my life has enabled me to mould it to be useful to the society as well as to me.

Buddhist Education is a very wide field. Hence, at the outset itself, I should clarify the limits within which I intend to speak. Invariably Buddhist Education should be founded on the fundamental core of the time-less Dhamma the Buddha preached. Some reference to this fundamental core is needed even if it be very brief. It is also necessary to make some references regarding the historical evolution of the institutes which influenced those who founded Buddhist scholastic institutes such as Mahinda. The influence of the philosophical movements; the nature of the social, religious, economic and political institutions both national and international, of that time, are aspects which should receive our critical attention. We should also critically examine the changes to Buddhist education which have occurred from the time the development of early Buddhist schools such as Ananda, Dharmaraja, Mahinda, Museaus, Vishaka, Nalanda, Dharmasoka, Maliyadeva and Dharmapala which supported the resurgence of Buddhism; to the introduction of free education and the take over of schools by the state. Finally I wish to state that in the context of the prevailing confused social

situation, the objective of this lecture, is to express some ideas on the future of Buddhist education, particularly that given through preuniversity education institutes. Yet this cannot be done within the short time that I have for this presentation.

In expressing my ideas on all these aspects, it would be easier for me to present Buddhist Education as a continuing evolutionary trend if I center it around Mahinda College which has made a unique contribution to Buddhist education and Buddhist resurgence. When Colonel Henry Steele Olcott landed in Sri Lanka in 1880, there were only a small number of Buddhist schools. However, by 1890 about two hundred Buddhist schools were established of which Mahinda was one. The Theosophists through their Buddhist Theosophical Society provided the administrative structure necessary for this school network. It is said that when the British invaded Sri Lanka in the 18th century, Sri Lanka through its temple education had a higher literacy rate than Britain. Some of the weaknesses of the temple education pointed out by Dr. Bowles Daly, the first principal of Mahinda, were as follows: organizational weaknesses, inadequate equipment, financial problems, weaknesses in discipline and methods of teaching. He pointed out at the outset that if these weaknesses were to be overcome, Mahinda College, a school organized along Western lines and doing its teaching in the English medium needed an appropriate Western philosophy and values. Mahinda College which weakened after the departure of Dr. Daly continued for several years under local principals.

From the time he landed in the Galle harbour on 1st August, 1903, he was received by the high-ranking officers of the Galle Buddhist Theosophical Society and taken to the Mahinda College buildings in the Galle Fort. Mr. F.L.Woodward accepted the future of Mahinda College as his complete responsibility. Withing a year, he succeeded in raising the enrollment from 89 pupils and 5 teachers to more than 250 pupils. When Mr.Woodward left in 1919, the school was complete with around 400 pupils in a complete complex of buildings on its present site.

Woodward became acquainted with Buddhism, through the Theosophical theories which had spread across America and Europe during the latter half of the 19th century. Woodward who

took the future Metteyya Buddha as his ideal, decided to minimize his egoism by spreading loving kindness to all and dedicating his life for the welfare of others. The period he devoted to the creation of Mahinda was the practical application of this determination.

The Indian Buddhist universities such as Nalanda, Takshila, Wickremashila; the Buddhist higher education institutes such as Mahavihara and Abhayagiri in the Anuradhapura period and the pirivenas and education institutes associated with temples which emerged later were all situated in environments close to nature. Woodward's desire was to remove Mahinda College from its Fort environment habited by drunkards and prostitutes to a more calm and natural environment. As soon as the Olcott Hall, the class rooms, the principal's bungalow and other buildings were completed with great effort and in the midst of financial problems, accusations and anxieties, Mahinda College was shifted to its new site on 1 st August,] 912 exactly 9 years after accepting the leadership of the College and 21 years after the College was established.

The six-cornered star formed by two overlapping triangles chosen as the school crest, the school colours black and gold, its motto "Khippam Vayama Pandito Bhava" taken from the Dhammapada are all symbolic of the Buddhist Theosophical Society.

It is obvious that Woodward had no doubt that the environment, the buildings, the philosophical symbols were the necessary preliminary requirements for a true education. Also, "Who are the pupils we should educate?" has become a significant aspect of what we now regard as the Woodward tradition. He who laboured to build up the Mahinda education institute, never admitted to the school any student who could not adapt himself to the Mahinda culture. His motto was, "Learn only because you like to learn". Send your child here if he wants to learn and if there is to be a complete awakening of his personality but not if he is to be filled up with facts. It is good if he passes examinations. But his mind will not be filled up with factual content. If you do not like it do not send your child here. The educational objective which takes pride of place here, is to provide guidance to the child for the full development of his personality and not to make them succeed at examinations or to make them ready for jobs. This is the most valuable element of the Woodward Tradition.

The goal of Mahinda College was the education of pupils who could think independently, meet national needs and build up the nation, have an understanding of the cultural, religious and national goals and not the production of other types of people coming out of an English education system. Even so, Mahinda College was able by 1910 to submit candidates fit for academic studies to the Cambridge Examinations at a level comparable with Royal College in Colombo and Richmond College.

Mr. F. L. Woodward rendered an incomparable national service not only by building up Mahinda College but also by promoting the building up of the Ceylon University as a member of the National Education Commission and also as a silent but powerful initiator of the Buddhist and national resurgence.

It was the practice of the principal and the teachers and students of the school to take Pansil and recite Gathas at the commencement and end of the school day, to go to the temple on Poya Days and observe Ata Sil, listen to sermons and take part in meditation.

Although the medium of instruction was English, Mr.Woodward made the teaching of Sinhala a compulsory part of the school curriculum. Despite opposition. Pali and History were also made compulsory subjects. In that era, it was a revolutionary action to make such changes in the curriculum of an English school. Not only did he make such changes but he also took all steps to ensure that these subjects were accepted as subjects at government examinations. The teaching of Buddhism in the higher classes was done by Mr. Woodward himself. He rendered an invaluable service to make the understanding of Buddhism of the students, wider, deeper and more correct by translating into English the Buddhist texts which were in Pali.

In the words of Mr. F. G. Pearce, who was the deputy to Mr. Woodward and served as the Principal from 1920 to 1923, it was the Buddhist education of Mahinda College which gave the leadership to the Buddhist awakening in Southern Sri Lanka and to the national movement. An essential component of this national awakening was the teaching of Sinhala and Pali.

It was Mr. F. G. Pearce who sacrificed everything for three years to serve as the Principal to carry forward the Buddhist

Education according to the Woodward tradition. I wish to draw your attention to an article written by him titled "Our Aim" in the College Magazine of 1923 and reproduced in the College Magazine of 2002, that is this year. It was an address to the students, the old boys, to the parents and in general to the Buddhist public. In the beginning of the article itself, he criticizes very strongly a statement made by the principal of a missionary school. The head of that missionary school had stated that the goal of that institute was not the production of saints. Mr. Pearce states that the head of the school had forgotten the dictum from his Master to his followers, "Be ye therefore perfect". Mr. Pearce goes on further to state that it has devolved upon the Buddhists to put into practice the principles placed before us by Christ as well as by Lord Buddha. In the Buddha's time also, there were those who having decided that they could not follow the path pointed out by the Buddha preferred to lead an easy going life. Today also it is the same. There were also those who accepted that the Buddha has shown the one path to salvation, who believed that they could follow it and lived their lives accordingly. A Buddhist school should invariably be an institute taking the noble path shown by our peerless teacher, the Lord Buddha. The Lord Buddha has preached that the path is open to all those who make the effort to attain perfection, saintship, Arahatship and Nibbana.

It was Mr. Pearce's hope to restore to the children of Mahinda College, the hopes and self confidence which were lost consequent to the decline of the Sinhalese and of Buddhism which started with the Polonnaruwa period by giving up the ideology of an easy-going life and not neglecting the psychological and spiritual progress. Today also we have to follow the Noble Path shown then. We should also proclaim boldly that the path can be followed. There is no path to salvation other than the Noble Eightfold Path. Therefore our first and most important challenge is to give back to the Buddhist children their old religion; to create confidence in them that they have the skills to follow the path; to assert with conviction that as in the older era, anyone making a determined effort even now will reap the same results as of old. As stated by the Lord Buddha in the Mahavagga, "Gifts are great, the founding of viharas is meritorious, meditations and religious exercises pacify the heart, comprehension of the truth leads to Nibbana but greater than

all is loving kindness. As the light of the moon is sixteen times stronger than that of the stars, so loving kindness is sixteen times more efficacious in liberating the heart than all other religious accomplishments taken together." Buddhist education should be founded on the teachings of the Buddha. It should not be based on methodologies and principles borrowed from foreign countries. The educational foundations of Mahinda College are the Buddhist teachings and what we have taken from outside are only those which are in accordance with them. It was the view of Mr. Pearce that while we should learn from the educational practices of the old Indian ashramas and pirivenas we should not copy the public schools of England, Germany and America.

Mr. F. L. Woodward not only made a firm foundation for Mahinda College but he also pointed out clearly the direction it should take and the life it should lead. Many learned people have expressed the view that, more than anything else, the greatest gift he has given us is the Woodward Tradition brought into being at Mahinda College.

Dr. Kalidas Nag who served for a little more than a year, Mr. F. G. Pearce who was earlier the Vice-Principal who served from 1920 to 1923 and Mr. P. R. Gunasekera, not only carried forward the Woodward Tradition but also rendered an indomitable service for the development of the school in all aspects.

From 1932 to 1962 Mr. E.A.Wijesuriya, an old boy of the school, gave the leadership for the full development of the school, as its principal. He had all the physical characteristics and an imperturbable personality mixed with uprightness, composure and compassion, invariably associated with a leader, a teacher, a guide. I and many others here belong to the Wijesuriya era.

He discharged very well the assignment of providing for the country a set of pupils' proficient in both Sinhala and English within a Buddhist environment. He served as the Chairman of the Association of Heads of Schools which included such distinguished educationists as Rev. Fr. Peter Pillai of St. Josephs College, Mr.De Saram of St. Thomas' College, Mr. Simithrarachchi of Trinity College, Rev. Fr. Peiris of St. Aloysius College and Mr. E. R. de Silva of Richmond College, for several years and built up in

an exemplary manner the mutual understanding existing between the prestigious schools. He worked towards creating a Buddhist education for Buddhist children on the one hand while at the same time developing the harmony with other religious cultures and improving the educational status of the country in general. We should not forget the support given to his efforts by great philanthropists such as Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya and great teachers such as Mr. P. Dantanarayana who helped to develop the Woodward tradition further.

It is my belief that towards the end of the Wijesuriya era, the Buddhist Education launched by Mahinda College had some main features which may be described as follows.

The Buddhist philosophy, Buddhist principles and the Buddhist life-style were made a reality to the students by the subject-based and external education they received. The teacher-pupil relations between teachers and pupils included personal inter-relationships. While Mr. Edgar Wijesuriya and all the teachers knew every student in the school personally by name, they identified their natural abilities and succeeded in pointing to them the paths they should take. As stated by Mr. Pearce the school succeeded in meeting the educational needs of the students according to their Karma and the Dhamma. He believed that each student had a unique personality and that it was the duty of the school to provide the environment for the awakening of that personality and give him the needed knowledge and disciplinary skills. He provided the way for the student to develop a self-discipline without an external pressure and also for the student to develop his intelligence and wisdom naturally without forcing knowledge into the student's mind.

The methodology of the Buddhist education of Mahinda College illustrated how the knowledge of subject matter as well as external activities may be used for an integrated development of the pupil's physical, psychological, emotional, moral, cultural and spiritual life. The impact of nature, living close to nature, obtaining a subtle pleasure from the beauty of nature happened almost automatically without any overt effort. The invisible miracle of the education we received was our intuitive realization that we who are human beings are only a small unit of nature, and not separable from the vast universe composed of an infinity of visible and invisible mineral, plant and animal components.

A statement of the Buddha quoted by Mr. Pearce in article, "Our Aim". I referred to earlier is as follows:

"Whatever men do, whether they remain in the world as artisans, merchants, and officers of the king, or retire from the world and devote themselves to meditation, let them put their whole heart into their task; let them be diligent and energetic; and if they are like the lotus, which, although it grows in the water, yet remains untouched by the water, if they struggle in life without cherishing envy or hatred, if they live in the world not a life of self but a life of truth, then surely joy, peace, and bliss will dwell in their minds."

Since the Buddhist education method created by Mahinda College was not by any means limited by regional or national considerations, many great personalities who contributed to world culture participated in the wider education of the students of Mahinda. The students of Mahinda had the opportunity of being influenced, even in a small way, by the lives of such great international and national leaders as Mahatma Gandhi (who was the Chief Guest at the Mahinda College Prize Day on 24th November, 1927); the Hon. C F. Andrews and Dr.W.A.de Silva; the Great Poet the Revered Ravindranath Tagore; Madam Sarojini Chattoppadyaya; Madam Annie Bessant and Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam.

I will make this an opportunity to refer to a few Old Mahindians who were influenced by the Buddhist education emanating from Mahinda College. Learned men like Professor N.A.Jayawickrema, Professor M.B.Ariyapala, Professor Vinnie Vitharana, Professor Siri Gunasinghe, Professor David J. Kalupahana, Professor Jayadeva Tilakasiri, Professor Ariyadasa De Silva, Dr. C. Withanachchi, Dr. W. G. Weeraratne, communication expert Mr. Edwin Ariyadasa reputed educationalist Daya Ananda Perera who was the first Director General of the National Institute of Education and late Professor Nandadasa Kodagoda who have rendered and are continuing to render an inestimable service at university level in the fields of Sinhala, Pali, Sanskrit and the Buddha Dhamma, and other fields like education, mass communication and medicine are leading scholars who are spreading the Woodward Tradition at national and international levels like the massive branches of a great tree. They have also rendered a great service in correcting the presentations of Theosophical theories which are not in accordance

with the pure Buddhism and disseminating pure Buddhism world-wide.

Dr. David J. Kalupahana, the Professor of Philosophy in the University of Hawai, who, standing like an unmoved massive rock, has published a large number of books correcting the misinformation spread by local as well as foreign scholars in relation to the Buddha Dhamma, the Buddhist society and Buddhist culture and giving a true rendering of the original Buddhist teachings is a wise scholar produced by Mahinda College whom we should all respect.

Mr. Albert Edirisinghe (now a Buddhist monk) and late Mr. T. W. Ratnayaka, who established a Woodward Memorial Fund with Sarvodaya were two reputed people who demonstrated economic entrepreneurship on Buddhist principles. Professor J. K. P. Ariyaratne who has looked at Buddhism from a scientist's point of view and expressed valuable ideas through his books is an illustration of the Buddhist education tradition of Mahinda College polishing the religious views of a scientist.

When we think of the current situation, how many such people may be produced within the education system of today, who with such freedom of thinking, with creativity can contribute to the development of knowledge in academic and related fields? The entire time of the children is used to pour into the minds of children the subject matter content needed for examinations. The tutory tradition has taken root in this country and not the Buddhist and Woodward traditions. This invariably happens as a reaction to the demand to succeed at examinations expected by the education system leading to a supply structure emerging throughout the country.

The entire education is directed to meet economic objectives. The concept of Right Livelihood is submerged and the young minds are directed to methods of earning money any how. The economic policies needed for this are being made by highly paid government and World Bank specialists. The final result of this has been an unjust, violent society where many suffer from want.

There are many impediments to the implementation of an education methodology with a system of religious values. I like to refer to some of these. Buddhist education should be implemented on a foundation of Buddhist philosophy. It is not adequate to teach

Buddhism to children as a subject for an examination. It cannot by any means result in the establishment of a system of Buddhist values or a Buddhist way of life in the child or point the way to a Buddhist way of living. In comparison with other subjects the student gives a low rating for Buddhism.

It appears that sometimes the books written for the teaching of Buddhism as a subject have been written with only Buddhism in mind and ignoring elementary educational and psychological principles. As an example, in the pupil text for Grade 2, where the second of the Five Precepts is to be taught what is presented is a number of people assaulting a person who has stolen a bunch of banana fruits and who is to be handed over to the police. There is an illustration depicting this. The lesson being taught here is that one should not steal because one will get assaulted and will be subject to punishments from the police and the judiciary. Such simplistic lessons can never lead to the achievements of a Buddhist education.

If a Buddhist education is to be given to every child, every subject taught in the school should be presented to illustrate a Buddhist value framework. Every subject such as biology, physics, chemistry, geography, political science and economics can be so designed.

In the new book published in 2002 by the Pennsylvania State University Press, by the lawyer Brian D. Leppart titled "Rethinking Humanitarian Interventions", twenty three quotations from the Tripitaka are cited and the statement has been made that they should be taken into the international law. Among the subjects included are responsibility for crimes, democracy, responsibilities and virtues as the foundation for rights, treating every human being with equal dignity, implementing promises, war and humanity, humanitarian interventions, peace and justice, mutual relationships, moral studies and prevention of crime, citizen participation in state decisions, patriotism, peaceful resolution of conflicts, punishments for crimes, respecting diversity and unity in diversity.

To my mind, the Hon. Justice C.G.Weeramantry, the former Deputy President and former Acting President of the International Court of Justice in the Hague who has won a name for himself in

the modern world in the field of international law, is an eminent scholar who has shown the international community the need for Buddhism. I am not aware whether in our education system even at university level, there is a study of the books he has written and the judgments he has delivered encompassing the development philosophy, the irrigation and economic systems, the political maturity of the ancient Sinhalese influenced by Buddhism.

"Some Buddhist Perspectives on International Law" was the topic he chose for the 1998 memorial oration for Boutros Boutros Ghali, the former Secretary General of the United Nations Organisation. This lecture was given in Brussels. I am not aware of any other scholar, besides Prof. K.N.Jayatilaka who delivered a series of lectures on Buddhism and International Law at the Hague in 1967, who has studied this subject at such depth and expressed it before the world.

Allow me to quote a few paragraphs from Mr.Weeramantry's lecture.

> ... the principles and teachings of the Buddha .... can illuminate our path towards the international rule of law.
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> ....It is worthy of note in this context, that the Buddha was not a recluse, living away from people and their problems, but that he moved among the people, directing his attention to their problems, and that many resorted to him for guidance and instruction. Indeed, even the kings of the time sought his counsel and advice, so that problems of government and inter-State relations also engaged his attention.
>
> ....Buddhist philosophy was also completely ahead of its time in looking upon humanity as a whole and in setting before its followers the idea of " the welfare and happiness of mankind, out of compassion for the world" rather than the welfare and happiness of the nation or the individual.... this was the first time in Indian history that the idea of a 'general good' or a 'common good', not only affecting the common man but also peoples of the world is envisaged.

> ....As international law moves onwards towards becoming the common law of humanity, its failure to tap this immensely deep philosophy reveals a gap in its structure that urgently needs to be filled.

In his lecture, Mr.Weeramantry expounds at length on 22 subjects such as the nature of the universe according to the Buddhist philosophy, the Buddhist attitude to the place of the individual in the international society, peace for the human community, Buddhist teachings on change and impermanence, the causes of world problems according to the Buddhist analysis, Buddhism and nature's laws, righteous attitude, the ruler, democratic methods, progress of society, eradicating violence, peaceful resolution of conflicts, sale of armaments and preservation of the environment.

If we are really keen on a Buddhist education, a forum of Buddhist scholars, should enrich all the subjects taught from grade I to at least grade 11 with the knowledge gained from Buddhism and should show how to teach it not as separate subjects but how it may be incorporated into all others. I do not mean here that Buddhism should not be taught separately as a subject.

Another obstacle to giving a Buddhist education is that the development of schools is not taking place according to educational objectives but according to political decisions. When we consider the numbers of students in the present day national schools, it should be stated that they are far too large to give any kind of education let alone a Buddhist education. The number of students in a school should be limited to a level where the principal and the teachers can give their individual attention to every child. The indices used by the World Bank to measure education are economic ones. Our governments who follow these have completely forgotten the qualitative aspects of education and are gradually closing the small schools. This not only causes an injustice to the poor villages and communities but also leads to a further erosion of educational quality. What is needed is not the closure of small schools but the enrollment in those schools of children who are in the bigger schools and the development of the small schools to have the same resources and facilities as the bigger schools. The composition of the present school system is an obstacle and does not provide a productive environment for the implementation of not Buddhist education but of any education.

One way of solving this problem successfully is the concept of Gram Swaraj village self governance advocated by Sarvodaya. Under this the community itself can easily confer to an independent Gram Swaraj Board such aspects as the school composition, the control of teachers and pupils in relation to children from a pre-school age to grade 11. I am not elaborating on this subject as I have already given a detailed description about this in the Sir Baron Jayathilake Memorial Oration I delivered on the 13th February 2002 at the YMBA Borella.

A major objective of a Buddhist education should be the development of loving kindness in the personality of pupils. People with loving kindness in their minds, look at social problems with compassion and tend to render social service as may be needed. Those who are not motivated to render social service have had an incomplete education. Such people tend to use their knowledge and natural abilities for the achievement of their own selfish objectives.

Now internationally reputed Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement is a living example of how students and teachers of Nalanda College initiated a community-study service project to link the school with the community. The four sublime abodes or Satara Brahma Viharana, Metta, Karuna, Muditha and Upekka were the four Buddhist principles on which personality awakening of the children were founded. Similarly, Satara Sangraha Vastu or the four principles of social conduct, namely, Dana Priya Vachana Arthacharya and Samanathmatha were foundations of social awakening of this movement. All Buddhist schools can follow this example.

Modern society is one overwhelmed by consumption. Products which are needed as well as those not needed by the society are marketed with powerful advertising for the sole purpose of earning money. The environmental damage caused by such production is not heeded. Directly harmful products such as alcohol, drugs, cigarettes, dangerous agricultural chemicals and pesticides are marketed legally or illegally. Some drugs are publicly sold to school children as Ayurvedic medicines and pellets helpful in learning.

Sometime back it was reported that students who have got addicted to these are extorting money from innocent students to buy these and have also been in the midst of intra and inter-school

disturbances and fights. Special attention has to be paid by the parents, the education officials and the general public to control this situation immediately. This challenge has to be faced through school, university and community education avenues.

It is regrettable that today, Sri Lankan society has degenerated into a violent culture. At the individual level, it has become the norm for individuals to inflict violence on other individuals even for the slightest problem. In addition to this, we see a trend of organized violence due to political and economic reasons. The behavior of those who have taken to violence as a way of life, referred to as the underworld, is another form of structural violence. Apart from the individual and social violence, we should also pay attention to the structural economic and political violence which have taken root in our society. The structural violence operating at international levels provides nourishment to the national violence prevalent in our country.

The most visible and most destructive aspect of violence is war. We are witnesses to a 20 year old civil war history in recent times. The Buddha's words that "Hatred does not cease by hatred but by love" remains limited to the words themselves. It is unnecessary here to document the destruction caused to the country and to the people by the war. What is needed is how a society based on non-violence or in other words a peaceful society may be established by peaceful means. The question is, "How may Buddhist education be moulded from that perspective?". Here we can take as an example the school society at Mahinda College formed under the Woodward tradition. I think that here it is important to integrate into the education system by some means, the Buddhist principles and techniques for solving conflicts if the violence in the current confused society is to be eliminated.

After 1983 July riots the Sarvodaya Movement initiated a series of interfaith peace meditation programmes based on the teachings of the Buddha's Metta Bhavana. We conducted these in all parts of the country including the North and East. I personally conducted these meditations and nearly 1.8 million people had participated in these during the last nineteen years. During the last programme which we conducted in front of the Dalada Maligawa, in the Wel Bodhi Maluwa, for the first time we experienced harassment and

violence from an organized gang of disrupters led by some indisciplined Buddhist monks. We faced this disgraceful incident with compassion and non violence. To me this was an extension of the Woodward Tradition into a situation of violence and I am proud for being able to give leadership at this instance particular event in Kandy on the 22nd of August 2002.

It would be very useful at this point to consider the views on Buddhist education expressed by one of our most learned Buddhist monks, namely, the Venerable Bhikku Bodhi. He has written on the topic, "Aims of Buddhist Education" in the Buddhist Publication Society Newsletter No. 35 in 1997. Referring to the "sad state of affairs" in our school system, Bhikku Bodhi writes as follows:

A major cause of our educational problems lies in the "commercialization of education". The industrial growth model of society which today extends its tentacles even into the largely agrarian societies of South and South East Asia, demands that the educational system prepare students to become productive citizens in an economic order governed by the drive to maximize profits. Such a conception of the aim of education is quite different from that consistent with Buddhist principles. Practical efficiency certainly has its place in Buddhist education, for Buddhism propounds a middle path which recognizes that our loftiest spiritual aspirations depend on a healthy body and a materially secure society. But for Buddhism the practical side of education must be integrated with other requirements designed to bring the potentialities of human nature to maturity in the way envisioned by the Buddha. Above all, an educational policy guided by Buddhist principles must aim to instill values as much as to impart information. It must be directed not merely towards developing social and commercial skills, but towards nurturing in the students the seeds of spiritual nobility.

Any one interested in Buddhist education should make a deep study of this article by Bhikku Bodhi. I am greatly heartened by it since it indicates that we have leading Buddhist monks taking note of the problem and indicating the path we should take.

Let me now approach the problem from a different angle. One perspective from which modern science looks at the world is as fields of energy. From this perspective, not only psychologists but

also physicists and biologists appear to take a stand that the entirety of the modern universe is a unified set of mutually inter-acting energy fields subject to the principle of dependent origination. The three realities of Impermanence, Unsatisfactoriness and absence of a permanent ego as explained by the Buddha is inherent in the modern scientific thinking. When Lord Buddha taught us more than 2500 years ago, the Five Universal Laws pertaining to genetic factor (Bija Niyama), climatic factor (Uthu Niyama), causal factor (Kamma Niyama) mind factor (Citta Niyama), and Phenomena factor (Dhamma Niyama) was he not referring to these dynamic energy fields?.

During the last twenty years, a series of programmes were launched through the Sarvodaya Movement to remind people, particularly the Buddhist public, about these energies. I like to talk briefly about one of them, namely, the *Citta Niyama*.

Lord Buddha expressed to us the value of the mind with the words

"Mano Pubbangamadhamma Mano Setta Manomaya..."

It is important to control our words and our actions with a pure mind. In this age it is absolutely essential to fill our mindspace phychosphere with the energies of non-greed, non-hatred and non-illusion and not allow it to be filled with greed, hatred and ignorance. The objective of the of Peace Meditation programme we have organized from 1983 is the purification of the mind-space in which we live. At the end of our meditations we make a firm determination that the resultant of all the mindenergies will lead to the establishment of peace in the minds of men and in general establish peace in the social and natural environment in which we live.

So karohi dipama attano - khippam vayama pandito bhava

Niddhantamalo anangano - dibbam ariyabhumim ehisi

Make an island (or light) unto yourself. Strive eagerly and become wise. Absolve yourself of taint and blemish and enter the heavenly land of the Noble Ones.

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LAW AND PEACE

Today we are meeting here to commemorate the memory of a great Mahindian who is no longer with us. He was brutally assassinated at his own residence in Deniyaya on 25th January 1989, when he was just 37 years old. In the words of Mr.J.H.Gunesekera, who was the Principal of Mahinda College at his time (1972), I quote, "Sarath Sepala Ratnayake belongs to the class of the most distinguished students produced by Mahinda College in its entire history." Sarath lived up to this reputation even afterwards when he entered the Faculty of Law of the University of Colombo in 1972 winning the coveted gold medal for the most outstanding student of the year. He proved his proficiency both in languages and in his scholarly grasp of the law by translating into Sinhala five books on law by Prof.G.L.Peiris when he was barely 25 years old. He further proved his mettle by working as Secretary and Treasurer of the Colombo Law Library when he practiced as a Lawyer and as an Executive Officer of a Bank.

As an old Mahindian I take it as a privilege to speak a few words at his first commemorative meeting which we are holding 13 years after he departed from us. For giving me this opportunity I thank Ms.Padmini Perera, Mr.Ravi Suriyarachchi and Mr.Punya Arambewela who personally met me on behalf of the President and Executive Committee of the Mahinda Club and persuaded me to accept their invitation to give this commemorative oration.

Considering the profession he chose, and the unpeaceful and chaotic environment in which he took to politics resulting in his demise I suggested to them that I would like to express some thoughts on Law and Peace in this lecture assigned to me. At the very outset I want to tell you that I will not deal with the words Law and Peace in the context in which these are generally understood.

For example there are numerous laws in our statute books, which are hardly known even to our most experienced lawyers or judges. The clever lawyer fishes out what is best for the occasion and uses it to win his case.

The letter of the law triumphs and the spirit of the law is generally lost sight of. The discretion in the hands of the judge, unlike in the hands of the leaders of other professions, is hardly exercised except under political pressure or fear. I have personally experienced this kind of situation both at lower and higher courts. While I respect the laws of the land I cannot say that justice is dispensed the way the laws are implemented in actual practice.

When Sarath was brutally murdered did the hand of the law take its normal course? Were the culprits found and brought to justice? If not why? This is not an isolated case. Even Kanchana Abeypala, a 26 year old young lawyer who appeared in Human Rights cases for Sarvodaya Legal Aid Services was a victim of state terrorism. There were hundreds of other instances during that period, though much less today, where the same fate had fallen on innocent law-abiding human beings. We may attribute all kinds of reasons for this state of degeneration in the realm of the dispensation of justice under accepted laws. However, what I consider to be more important for the transformation of our society to a more humane one is to turn to higher laws or Universal Laws that control man, society and nature, and transcending man-made laws. Maybe the time is ripe for us as the members of the civil society to think of these universal laws and to try to understood and resuscitate them so that man-made laws, for whatever they are worth, will also function more effectively and justly.

Mr.Sarath Sepala Ratnayake was not only a brilliant student and later, a scholar of considerable repute, he was also a versatile personality who excelled on the athletic fields and in literary activities as well. In addition, he was also a member of the English and Sinhala debating teams both at school and at the university. As a product of the Mahinda-Woodward tradition, he did not shy away from any challenge, even political, that he had to face.

He was the only son of Mr.Sepala Ratnayake who was elected to Parliament from Deniyaya in 1956. Legend has it that they were the

descendants of Sepala Ratnayake Nilame who was a main supporter of Keppetipola Adikaram who led the 1817-18 Rebellion against the English and escaped to the South when they were defeated. This was 150 years ago. Maybe it was this same fighting spirit that made Sarath to contest the seat in January 1989, culminating in the supreme sacrifice of his life.

When he took up this challenge I am sure he never considered the nature of the times in which he was living, the risk he was taking and the sacrifice he would have to make leaving his beloved wife *(Nelum)* and his two little children at the mercy of this rapidly degenerating violent society.

In our own small way we faced this period of terror promoted both by the state and the so-called liberators of our society. Personally I am fortunate to have survived those evil days. How many precious lives we lost during this period when political insanity and man's brutality to man were the order of the day. While man-made laws to dispense justice and uphold law and order were defunct, the universal laws referred to earlier continued to operate, bestowing on us what we deserved by our own actions or non-actions.

What are these universal laws valid for all times? Let us take an example:

> ***Nahi verena verani Sammanthija Kudacanam***
> ***Averena ca sammanthi Esa dhammo sanaththano***
>
> Hatred does not cease by hatred
> Only by non-hatred it ceases
> This is an eternal law. - *Dhammapada*

To me this eternal Dhamma of activating non-hatred is more valid to our times than the entire criminal procedures that have been painstakingly developed over decades and centuries by the human brain. While human laws are complex and change with the people who make and implement them, the Dhammic laws are simple and eternal. These eternal laws lay the responsibility on the human person and the community. In other words the Buddha admonishes us to cultivate Loving Kindness-*Metta*, as the Supreme Law.

From the time western democratic forms of governance were thrust upon our people, party and power politics became entrenched in our political life. Prior to that time, while the momentum of traditional spiritual values prevailed and respect for life was sustained in the minds of men, party politics did not disturb the peace and harmony that characterized our society. But as people began to climb the political ladder and gained a taste of centralized power along with all the privileges, powers and other spoils it carried with it, greed for power expanded out of all proportions and resulted in fueling organized hatred.

Sarath became a victim of such organized hatred and I do not think he was murdered due to any personal enmity. Collective organized hatred represents a powerful force that can quickly destroy the general peace in society. Those who have greed for political power find it expedient to poison the minds of gullible people with racial, religious or class hatred, with the result that nobody is spared however good or useful that individual is to society. It is this phenomenon of releasing negative, destructive energies that leads inevitably to conflicts and war. This is exactly what is happening in our society today even thirteen years after Sarath's demise. Should we allow this system of undemocratic, uncivilized party and power politics to continue in our society or should we look for an alternative form of non-party, non-power, people's participatory politics, founded on the concept of village or community self-governance. This is what Sarvodaya calls Grama Swarajyaya, which I believe is the only way to humanize politics.

Our society as a whole had a vision before the intrusion of materialistic western values. This vision which can be expressed in one word *Metta*, which means Loving-kindness or respect for all life. *Metta* was the fountainhead from which all other values pertaining to fellow-human beings, animals, plants and all other forms of nature originated. All actions towards others were a form of compassionate actions or *Karuna*. Such thoughts and deeds invariably gave a joy of living or a dispassionate joy in seeing the well being of others. This was called *Muditha* in the olden days. The final result was a balanced state of mind or equanimity, which was called *Upekkha*. The Buddha called these four attributes Brahma *Viharas* and advised us to cultivate them for the good of oneself and others.

How many of us strive today to cultivate mental equipoise? Our craze for more and more material things to satisfy our endless greed for sensory pleasures leaves us less and less time to look within ourselves, build intimate relationships with the members of our family and friends, and look for the spiritual richness of this human life. The style of life we are used to leading makes us increasingly self-centered and selfish. Naturally we get caught up in the rat race, investing the best of our energies in a life-long competition which takes us nowhere except to the end of a life span where the essence of our life has been lost.

But this rat race of westernization is not the only approach to modernizing our society. Instead of following western values and competition, we can recover our age-old social values such as Dana or Sharing, *Priya Vacana* or Pleasant Speech, *Arthacarya* or Constructive Deeds and *Samanathmatha* or Equality in association. If we approach modernization by this path, what a positive and healthy impact these values will have on our cultural, social, economic and political life. Even though there is a senseless globalization tide sweeping across our country, it is still not too late for concerned citizens of our country to seriously commit themselves within their individual, family and community life to resuscitating these values. Rather than cursing the darkness let us light a candle, as the saying goes.

By constructing an alternative path to modernization in this way, we can be guided by another eternal law that the Buddha taught, the law of Paticca Samuppada or Dependent Origination. The crux of this law is the teaching of interdependence, the interconnectedness of all beings and nature. The forces of globalization and westernization, by contrast emphasize individualism as their basic starting point, stressing that the individual must exert self effort and compete within society and nature for material rewards. This philosophy elevates desire to the status of a virtue, and creates a whole consumerist system that operates by the dynamism of desire. This materialistic philosophy based on desire creates structures of violence and leads the world closer to the brink of social and environmental destruction. This system undermines human relationships, promotes materialism, increases competition and validates complex, top-down systems that generate human suffering or *dukkha*.

If, however, we follow the eternal law of Paticca Samuppada, we can build up an alternative system that rejects the dynamism of desire and upholds the interdependence of man and nature. We all are dependent on each other, our lives develop and are fulfilled through networks of relationships. In Sarvodaya we have sought to follow this law by seeking integrated development rather than material development. Sarvodaya's ideal of an integrated development supported by spiritual values critiques the materialistic, capitalistic model of development dominant in Sri Lanka since the colonial period. Although the Western, globalization model defines wealth in quantitative terms and creates desires for the objects that it produces, Sarvodaya declares that spiritual values represent the true wealth and so we emphasize the importance of awakening our consciousness. Sarvodaya's model of development based on this eternal law is "people- centered" and has as its primary aim "human fulfillment" rather than the creation of material wealth.

We can also examine other Universal Laws as well, such as the *Pancha Niyama Dhammas*, the five cosmic laws, to which the Buddha wanted us to pay our attention. The cosmic laws pertaining to Genetic Order *(Bija Niyama)*, Climates *(Utu Niyama)*, Cause and Effect *(Kamma Niyama)*, Phenomena *(Dhamma Niyama)* and Mind *(Citta Niyama)* have to be studied, understood and followed if we are to restore sanity and order to our societies. In order to understand these cosmic laws, we will have to undergo a revolution in our mindset or a transformation of our consciousness. This transformation of our consciousness will do more to change the chaotic and unpredictable situation that we all have placed ourselves and our civilization in than all the laws our legislatures might conceive.

When there is no peace in the human mind, human society or the natural environment how can we consider a ceasefire to be a state of peace. It may well turn out to be a temporary phase where guns have stopped firing while preparing for more ferocious violence unless we delve deep into the real reasons for the absence of true peace in our society. Our civil society should use the opportunity that this ceasefire period affords to try to transform our consciousness to a state of *Metta*, where our relationships will be based on mutual respect and tolerance. We should also pay serious attention to the way that we utilize our natural resources and the impact

of technology on our environment. It is the sum total of our conduct in all these sectors that will determine whether we are heading towards a non-killing society or whether we are inviting worse disasters in the time to come.

The biggest tribute we can pay to Mr.Sarath Sepala Ratnayake, who succumbed to violence, is to dissociate ourselves totally from violence in thought, word and deed as human beings.

Once we have steadfastly embraced non-violence as our way of life then we will be motivated to look at structural violence in our society and try to remove such violence also from our midst. Once we recognize and address the structural violence, we can build more humane and non-violent social, economic and political structures in our society.

Dear members of the Mahinda Club, By organizing this lecture you have upheld an important tradition in our culture. That is:

Rupam Jirathi Maccanam – Nama Gottam Najirathi.

One's physical remains disintegrate but the good one's personality has rendered to society and fellow-beings will be remembered and continue to inspire us. In case of Sarath you have done your traditional duty. With the formation of a Foundation in his name I believe you will perpetuate his name and contribute to positive social thinking as well. Thank you for inviting me and I wish you continuing success in your endeavors through the Mahinda Club.

The First Sarath Sepala Ratnayake Memorial Oration lecture delivered on 18th October 2002 at the Library Services Auditorium, Colombo.

FIFTH M. A. BAKEER MARKAR MEMORIAL LECTURE

A PEOPLE'S PATH TO PEACE

I consider it an honour to have been called upon to deliver the fifth commemorative lecture in memory of the late **Deshamanya Al-haj Mohamed Abdul Bakeer Markar**. I had the privilege of knowing him as a Member of Parliament, the Speaker and the Governor of the Southern Province. This assignment is of special significance to me because in my Sarvodaya work I had the opportunity to know him, to get his blessings and co-operation and to get inspired by the exemplary life he led.

We are living at a time when politics has become a lucrative vocation for a sizable proportion of enterprising humans. Organizations popularly known as political parties accommodate them and provide the needed resources and opportunities to make a success out of their chosen vocation. First, they help the party to capture power and once in power they conduct themselves in such a manner treating with contempt every norm in society that stand in their way. The number may be few but their evil influence permeates the party as a whole and the political culture of our country in general. When most parties commit this mistake democracy becomes a mockery. The social cost of these usurpers of party and power politics is so heavy that the silent majority of people in our country and many other countries have begun to lose faith in prevailing democratic institutions where party and power politics dominate. This is a very dangerous trend that has to be checked with least delay if we are to prevent further degeneration of our societies into total lawlessness and chaos.

It is in this background that we have to evaluate the role of personalities of the caliber of **Deshamanya Al-haj Mohamad Abdul Bakeer Markar,** a politician cum statesman par excellence, who ascended from his village local government body to the third highest political office in the country. What are the salient features of his political life from which the present generation of politicians and the art of politics itself can learn?

As we are living in an age of violence and conflict the world over, I chose the subject **'A People's Path to Peace'** with the consent of his son, his political successor, who is following the footsteps of his worthy father, the Honorable Member of Parliament and Minister of Communications, Imtiaz Bakeer Markar. I am sure as a leader of the people and a man of peace the late **Mr. M.A. Bakeer Markar** himself would have approved this subject.

If one were to ask **Mr. M. A. Bakeer Markar** what were the principles that guided his political career he would have unhesitatingly and promptly recited the following Pali stanza he had learnt at school:

දානං සීලං පරිවවාගං-අජජවං මජ්ජවං තපං
අකෙකාධෝ අවිහිංසාව-ඛන්තීව අවිරෝධිතා

In Buddhist teachings they were known as the Ten Principles that a ruler should follow – Dasa Raja Dharma; Namely, Beneficence, Morality, Charity (which I would call recognition and promotion of talent), Uprightness, Impartiality, Composure, Non-hatred, Non-violence, Patience and Non-revengefulness.

Those who knew him personally can recollect numerous instances where he practiced these qualities both in his private and public life. A true leader cannot have two sets of principles guiding him, one for his private life and another for his public life. Reading through his biographies one by *Mr. Heras Fernando, Al-haj Bakeer Markar,* and the other by *Mr Chamika Munasinghe, Deshamanya Al-haj Bakeer Markar*, and his *Parliamentary speeches* edited by *Mr. A. H. M. Azwer, M.P.,* we come across clear instances of a transparent personality who gave expression to the Ten Principles of a good Ruler I mentioned.

He could have succeeded in amassing wealth if he took to his family business or the profession of indigenous medicine he inherited from the time his ancestors were the physicians for the Sinhala Kings. The legal career he practiced would have been another avenue open to him to acquire wealth. He rejected both a life of poverty or a life of affluence. He chose the middle path where he practiced and preached to his community to build a no-poverty no-affluence society that would work for all and bring happiness to all.

Naturally he was able to use all these three talents to the end of his life to help people to overcome poverty, to acquire good health and enjoy rights under the law as free and equal citizens. He was an embodiment of Dana - Beneficence. His political life was one of donating his time, thoughts, knowledge, skills and wealth for the upliftment of all.

In his farewell speech to Parliament on 9th June 1988 he stated:

> *"I am a Muslim and proud to be one. I am proud to be a Sri Lankan, for here in Sri Lanka a man can freely worship God in his accustomed fashion. Islam regards all mankind as one. He is to be most respected who best serves God and man"*
>
> *"We Muslims extend our bond of friendship to all communities whom we regard as being one nation, so that together we can march forward towards that one divine event to which the whole creation moves."*

He ended the same speech with the following words:

"May this House through its activities bring peace and amity to our country and ensure the well-being and happiness of all its people. May Allah bless you all. May the Triple Gem guide you all."

In the above words are contained the essence of his life's philosophy from which all other values expected of a ruler such as morality, selflessness, uprightness, impartiality in judgment, composure in conduct, non-hatred, non-violence, patience, and non-revengefulness radiated from the centre of his heart.

We as people of different religions may verbally take our Pancha Sila, the Five Precepts, chant our hymns, say our different prayers and participate in all the customs, rituals and other externalities associated with religious practices and yet our hearts may be empty of any spirituality. When religious labels, institutions, structures and leaders themselves divide human beings into separate interest groups, without focusing on the noblest objective of founders of our faiths, namely, in his words "to march forward towards that one divine event to which the whole creation moves" "bringing peace and amity ensuring the well-being and happiness of all...." untold suffering is caused to humans, all other living beings, the environment and nature itself. Blinded by the glamour of a materialistic civ-

ilization and its many technical and cultural achievements, this indescribable suffering is ignored because the dominant mentality embraces a state of spiritual ignorance and stupor.

If people of religion would have foremost in their minds this **'one divine event'** he has referred to, most of the world's problems can be solved and new dangers to human well-being can be averted. For me this divine event may be the Supreme Bliss of Nirvana. To another it may be oneness with God or Brahma or Moksha. All other external functions of religions should be in conformity with this ultimate spiritual objective. Without this supreme objective religions can do more harm than good. When every human being will march forward to his or her spiritual goal he or she will not impinge on the right of other human beings to legitimately practice their own religions in freedom. No civilized person or religious group will force others by deception, bribery, threat or punishment to change one's faith. They will reject all forms of violence associated with religious differences. Only a man who has imbibed spirituality through his religion can say "May Allah Bless you all. May the Triple Gem Bless you all."

Every human being should have a philosophical grounding out of which he or she lives his or her life. This is called a cosmology or worldview. Religions helped man to find a meaning to life. Most people fall short of this ideal because they mistake a sectarian goal as an ideal. True ideals are always for universal good. Our worldviews are shaped first by our sensory contacts, sensations and perceptions. Next we generate thoughts, which enhance the already conditioned stream of consciousness. If our minds are greed oriented or harbor ill will against a person, group or race, this ignorance of reality, of the sanctity of all life, can create very powerful negative and destructive thoughts and emotions. In the extreme case a person has been known to take his or her own life or the lives of others for a so-called political or politicized-religious objective. Their minds block all non-violent alternatives. This is the same psychological process that works in people who crave after more and more sensual pleasures and commit murder, rape, robberies and other anti-social acts.

Generally speaking, in modern societies, the spiritual potential of religions does not manifest itself effectively and sufficiently to transform the mind-set of the global society. In the same token I like to state that most governments and their decision makers are spiritual-

ly blind. Therefore, the global society does not move from conflicts to harmony, poverty to no-poverty, environmental poisoning to environmental health, human rights violations to human rights protection, compilation of armaments to disarmament, and from war to peace. This is why I say we, as people have to search for a Pathway to Peace, if necessary, independent of religious institutions and governments. This does mean we have to take a confrontational path. Within the spirit of the religious laws and state laws we should be able to generate non-violent constructive processes as individuals, families and communities transcending all man-made barriers.

In most countries governments profess democracy while standing alienated from the people. They too are blind to a worldview where the well being of the whole of humanity and their life-support systems are ensured. Very often, in most countries, a few people dominate all investment and cultural decisions and run governments. They pay scant respect for liberties of people or public opinion. Millions of people the world over, including in America and Britain, have protested against violence and war. But they cannot prevent governments from taking recourse to war if that serves the narrow political and economic interests of the small elite groups controlling the awesome levers of power.

In the opening statement I made about our own situation in this country regarding the lawlessness and violence I asked the question whether political parties are relevant today for good governance, democratic way of life, sustainable development, building peace in our minds and society and protecting our environment. Perhaps we have to think about an alternative pathway to democratic politics as well where people can participate better for their own well-being.

What do I mean by a People's Pathway? It is a course of action people who share a non-violent worldview take by thought, word and deed. They work within their own vicinity in the areas of basic needs satisfaction, human rights and duties and safeguarding the environment. They depend on self-reliance and community participation. They draw up their own agenda of sustainable development in the best scientific way according to their understanding. They network with other similar community efforts with whom they have a philosophical affinity for mutual benefit regionally, nationally and internationally.

Like the late Mr. Bakeer Markar I also do believe in the Buddha's words **Yathavadi Thathakari - Tathavadi Yathakari** යථාවාදී තථාකාරී - තථාවාදී යථාකාරී Practice what you preach and preach what you practice. He sincerely believed in a language policy for our country. He fearlessly advocated it since 1960 and put it into practice by giving all his children an education in the Sinhala medium. In our opinion he may have been right or wrong. But what I am emphasizing is the fact he conducted himself true to his conscience. I am also a believer of this principle and what I am going to tell you later in this lecture is a concept we developed as a People's Pathway to Peace in **Sarvodaya**, which, we have practiced over a period of forty-five years.

First and foremost we have to realize that every living and non-living object, however minute or large is inter-connected and inter-dependent with all the others. The understanding of this inter-connection is far more fundamentally important than concepts of physical global communications, transport systems, exchange of goods, services, ideas, systems and technologies, international financial links and so on. ***Ven.Thich Nat Hanh,*** a famous Vietnamese monk and Dhamma teacher, calls this 'interbeing.'

I would like to expand on this concept of "inter-being" because I believe it is very important for us in our present situation where we have essentially come to see a distinction between "us" and "them". That is why we have had a war and we continue to have violence. We also tend to think of the "environment" as something out there "external" to us. We have isolated ourselves from each other and also from "nature" forgetting that we are also a part of nature.

The Venerable Thich Nat Hanh uses some very simple examples from every day life to put across this very valuable concept of "inter-being". I shall try to adapt some of his examples to suit the present occasion. You have all got a copy of my paper. For a few moments, please reflect on all that has gone on previously to make that simple event happen. Let us take the simpler things first. How did the paper come into being? Did it just appear by itself? Some time back the material of the paper you are holding was part of a tree either in this country or in some other country. Certain conditions are required for a tree to grow; sunlight, water, soil etc. May be it grew naturally. Many people would have been involved in cutting it down, trans-

porting it to a paper making factory, turning it into paper before it ended up in your hands. If those people were not there and the conditions for the growth of the trees were absent, then we would not have had the paper. Very often we forget this relationship with other people and nature.

You do not have blank sheets of paper. I have been inspired by many many people to write what I have written. The immediate inspiration has of course been the late **Mr.Bakeer Markar**. I am what I am and you are what you are primarily on account of the very many interactions we have had with other people. None of us can stand-alone and aloof from others of whatever kind. We cannot stand aloof from nature either. We are made from the same stuff that nature is made of. We are all related to each other in many many ways.

A part of the reason for this alienation is that we have replaced human relationships with money transactions. When we buy a kilo of local rice, we very often forget the farmer in the field. We do not think of his family, we do not think of the labour he has put into producing the rice nor of his commitment to practicing his age-old profession, which results in the continuation of our food supply. We are fooled and overwhelmed by sterile economic theories and practices, which threaten the very life on this planet. Unfortunately for many of us farmers are another set of people who live somewhere else with whom we have nothing much to do. We have to be one with the farmers. They are also us. If I say we have to be one with the "beggars" also, it should come as no surprise to many of you who are followers of Islam. The inter-dependence of all life on this planet is at the heart of "inter-being".

The realization of this global view, which has modern scientific approval and recognition makes a person so harmless and humble that it is a matter of time before his or her consciousness begins to vibrate with non-violence and friendliness towards all. The Buddha introduced to the world The Teaching on ***Dependent – Orgination, The Paticca Samuppada Dharma***. The Buddha called the quality of cultivating friendliness towards all *'Metta'* and non-violent activists universally use this word. *'The Karaniya Metta Sutta'* – The Buddha's Discourse on Loving Kindness is comparable to a Universal Charter on Non-violence.

I recently read a book *Non-violent Soldier of Islam: Badshah Khan – A Man to Match His Mountains* authored by **Professor Eknath Easwaran** and published by Nilgiri Press. I recommend this book to be read by all who believe in non-violent transformation of societies. This book is a must for all Muslims who face turbulent times in the Middle East and several other places in the world. I take the liberty of quoting from this book some words of Abdul Gaffar Abdul Khan. He was the uncrowned King of Pathans and also was known as Frontier Gandhi. When he was almost eighty years of age, in 1969, I had the good fortune of seeing him, listening to him and getting his blessings during the Mahatma Gandhi Centenary Celebrations in New Delhi. I quote:

-*"There is nothing surprising in a Muslim or a Pathan like me subscribing to the creed of non-violence. It is not a new creed. It was followed fourteen hundred years ago by the Prophet all the time he was in Mecca, and it has since been followed by all those who wanted to throw off an oppressor's yoke. But we had so far forgotten it that when Gandhiji placed it before us, we thought he was sponsoring a novel creed."*

-"The Holy Prophet Mohammed came into this world and taught us; that man is a Muslim who never hurts anyone by word or deed, but who works for the benefit and happiness of God's creatures. Belief in God is to love one's own followers."

"It is my innermost conviction that Islam is amah, yakeen, muhabat (work, faith and love) and without these the name "Muslim" is sounding brass and tinkling cymbal....."

"No true effort is in vain. Look at the fields over there. The grain sown therein has to remain in the earth for a certain time, then it sprouts, and in due time yields hundreds of its kind. The same is the case with every effort in a good cause."

The first step in a People's Pathway to Peace is sowing the seeds of non-violence in human consciousness. We should strongly believe that in Sri Lanka, we as a people, can achieve this objective with great success, if we work with patience and right understanding. Such individual, family and community awakening can contribute to this process of transformation of consciousness until a critical mass of spiritual consciousness is created that will have an overriding

impact over all those forces of violence and divisiveness which have eaten into the social, political and economic fabric of this country. It is basically a process generated from below permeating and reaching into wider and higher strata of our society. Emphasizing the spiritual awakening of individuals, families and communities so far in 15,000 village and urban communities in Sri Lanka, the **Sarvodaya Movement** has initiated this non-violent transformation process.

I spent one whole month last July and August in United States of America at the invitation of Sarvodaya USA. Starting from Boston, Detroit, Washington and New York in the east coast I visited several cities in the mid country like Phoenix in Arizona ending up in San Francisco in the west coast, meeting, talking and meditating with thousands of Americans who believe in non-violent activism. Never before in my previous visits had I sensed so much commitment to non-violence and peace as a response to fear and uncertainties caused by terrorism and war. According to a lead story in the **TIME** Magazine of 4th of August 2003, over 20 million Americans have taken to meditation. Right across America there are many Vipassana meditation centres where teachers who were trained in Burma and Thailand conduct regular meditation courses.

On July 17th immediately after visiting the former site of the World Trade Centre Twin Towers, or Ground Zero as it is now called, I noted down in my diary the following thoughts that came to my mind.

"I have been on the top of the Twin Towers on three previous occasions. My last visit was in the year 2000 with my wife. We stood on the top floor and viewed the majestic sight of New York City. Today it is a desolated ground around which a fence has been constructed to build another concrete skyscraper taller than the one that was destroyed. Like every thing else living or non-living it reminded me of the universal truth of Impermanence."

"What a horrible tragedy? What an act of inhumanity of man towards man? How a terrorist mind can give expression to revengeful and destructive emotions? It does not give any consideration to innocent lives, which had nothing to do with a government policy or actions. What happened in New York and Washington on September 11, 2001 happened in Sri Lanka on a smaller scale and over a period

of time where thousands of innocents were killed by terrorist attacks. The world did not take sufficient notice that this can escalate into proportions where even the richest and militarily most powerful country in the world could be threatened.

Here is a permanent wall built on one side of the site and over three thousand names of the victims are carved out. People believe there was three thousand others who were killed who were illegal migrant workers. This place is visited by thousands of people everyday. Some were crying looking through the names. Several times tears came to my eyes also. Many had written remarks on a temporary wall on the opposite side in remembrance of the dead ones. I did not notice a single statement of hatred or revenge. It was all words of love, sympathy, shock and forgiveness.

This heinous crime was committed using modern and most advanced technology. Two airplanes that were hijacked were made to hit straight at the twin towers. This shows how dangerous it is to have advanced technology without a parallel advancement in spiritual qualities of love, compassion and respect for life. This is a two way process. Not only the terrorists but also the governments of USA and other advanced countries are responsible for this situation. For political and economic purposes they used these people who later turned terrorists. Instead they should have improved the economy, the living conditions and democratic institutions in these countries so that terrorism would never have risen its head. Oil was considered to be of more value than human lives and people's freedom and right to live a decent life.

Fanatics who have not grasped the essence of spirituality and non-violence in religions use religious susceptibilities of ignorant people for political purposes when people face real or imaginary injustices. They are completely ignorant of non-violent techniques to fight against injustices. Development is measured by physical growth. I am not aware of a single government or UN agency with a place for the upliftment of spiritual qualities of the human species in their agenda.

One thought that occurred in my mind was to organize a mass meditation event at the Ground Zero in New York and transfer merit to the departed as we do here in Sri Lanka. I meditated there for a

few minutes and with my spiritual strength and as a Buddhist transferred the merit to all those innocents who perished on September 11th. I wished "Never again may such a tragedy occur in the world."

Whether it is the Hiroshima and Nagasaki holocaust at the end of World War II caused by the American government or the Twin Tower Tragedy caused by terrorists both are fundamentally the outcomes of destructive minds and emotions resorting to violence.

The world economy is a highly organized violent structure. This structural violence causes over two billion people to live in poverty and sub-human conditions. The new globalization policies, I believe, make the conditions worse. When people are instigated by power-hungry elements against unjust economic structures, the remedy is not crushing them down with violence. Violence begets more violence. Structural violence should be removed and people should be empowered to build their own democratic institutions, improve their economy and learn to protect human rights and perform human duties. Non-violent positive action and not revengeful violent action is the answer. There is no other way to fight terrorism."

Having said so much about the importance of a non-violent foundation particularly in the consciousness of people, now I will turn to what people themselves can do to build a more harmonious and peaceful society. This is from an experience we have gained in working in 15,000 villages in Sri Lanka for the last 45 years. What I state is from our own experience.

We work in communities both rural and urban. Each community may have a population ranging from 200 families to 1000 families. With these communities who have expressed a desire to work with us, we have a series of discussions and come to a consensus on a need-based development activity beneficial to the community. We do not bring into the discussion caste, religious, racial or political differences in the community. We are only concerned with a basic-needs satisfaction programme the community itself wishes to be involved in. This need may be an access road to the village, series of drinking water wells, an irrigation tank or a canal, a pre-school building or a playground for school children. The village-level organizers with the guidance of experienced Sarvodaya community development workers plan out everything including the necessary

legal requirements, human and material resources, tools and equipment needed to do the task and if outside volunteers are invited to prepare their food, shelter and sanitary facilities. The technique used is the Shramadana Camp Method. This is an opportunity for the people to celebrate their self-reliance and community participation through acts of sharing for the well being of all. Six to eight hours of physical labour, three to four hours of what we call family gatherings held in the camp, which has a great spiritual, cultural and educational value is conducted in a days programme. The outcome of such an exercise is not only the achievement of the targeted physical objective, but also the establishment of a commonly shared psychological infrastructure.

This psychological infrastructure building through Shramadana camps is followed up by carefully training a group of young people in the village to follow up on what they have started. An educated young girl from the village with the help of mothers is selected and trained for starting a pre-school and taking care of the nutrition, health and psychosocial needs of the pre-school children. Similarly, the school going children are organized under the leadership of an organized women's group. This second step is what is known as social infrastructure building where the community is organized according to their age groups and basic needs. In actual fact the people themselves are organized to satisfy by their own efforts categories of needs coming under the following sectors:

1. The physical and psychological environment
2. Clean water for drinking and water for irrigation purposes
3. Simple clothing
4. Nutritional requirements
5. Health and sanitation
6. Housing
7. Energy requirements
8. Communication needs
9. Education
10. Cultural and spiritual needs

Here is a chain of activities around which people are motivated, constructively organized and activated. The inherent potential skills of people young or old thus get awakened and they put to use the knowledge they possess and get themselves involved in decision-making and implementation. The more results they see the more they get away from mere slogans and divisive forces and develop people's power to win their rights by lawful and non-violent methods.

The third stage in a people's awakening process is the organizing of a village **Sarvodaya Shramadana Society** registered with the governmental authorities so that they can function as an independent legal body.

Fourth stage of the process is where people start their own economic development activities beginning with a Savings and Credit Programme progressing into their own **Sarvodaya Village Development Bank.** There are over eight hundred such banks already functioning successfully.

The fifth stage is when they join hands with similar societies around their community for networking and mutual support to achieve higher targets catering to the needs of a cluster of villages.

In this manner in 15,000 villages in Sri Lanka we have been able to transcend all man made divisions and make tens of thousands of families belonging to all three communities and religions to work towards a common goal of national awakening which we call **Deshodaya**. To assist the efforts of the village people the **Sarvodaya Movement** has established 340 divisional level centres, 34 district level centres, 08 Development Education institutes, a large headquarters complex at Moratuwa with specialized professional units in areas such as Early Childhood Development, Maternal Welfare and Women's Participation, Economic Upliftment, Legal Services, Care for the orphans, the handicapped, the refugees, the old and the destitute, Communication Technology, Vocational Training, Environment, and National and World Peace.

Due to time constraints I am not going into details of this Gandhian model of sustainable development, but I would like to say a few words about the People's Path to Peace, which we have been following for over four decades. Starting from 1960 we tried our

very best to prevent the escalation of violence due to communal differences. When in 1983 July the country experienced the worst wave of violence we immediately started a programme called **5R**, meaning Relief, Rehabilitation, Reconstruction, Reconciliation and Reawakening especially in the North and East. We put in our maximum efforts and implemented this programme and right through urged for a peaceful solution to the conflict.

In 1990 we published the **Sarvodaya Peace Action Plan** and to this day we are following it step by step. In that plan we projected a course of action to be taken, immediately, in 5 months, in 01 year, 05 years, 10 years, 50 years, 100 years and 500 years. In other words our today's thinking and actions should contribute to sustainable peace for future generations.

In that document we pleaded for a Cease Fire and stated 10 basic conditions for the cease fire which I am quoting below:

1. Guarantee safety of all citizens everywhere (freedom from fear)
2. Guarantee freedom from summary execution, torture, terror and humiliation.
3. Guarantee free movement of all people everywhere (the right to travel).
4. Guarantee freedom of ideas, information and political expression (democracy).
5. Guarantee freedom of religious and spiritual expression.
6. Guarantee freedom and equality of culture, language and creative expression.
7. Guarantee respect for the persons and property of all citizens.
8. Guarantee non-interference with work and the opportunity for right livelihood.
9. Guarantee democratic and non-violent participation in governance.
10. Guarantee the right of self-determination of every individual and community.

We are happy that the Government and the LTTE came to an agreement on a cease-fire and nearly 18 months have passed. In spite of minor problems they are continuing to talk and negotiate. It is our fervent hope that the kind of cease-fire we are having today will evolve itself to fulfill the above conditions. As far as we are concerned while we fully support a peaceful resolution to this conflict we continue to work with people on an appropriate and a long-term vision.

What our **Action Plan** indicates is our belief, inherent in a Buddhist Vision, that action in only one domain is not adequate. For easy understanding and communication to the people, the very complex situation with its multitude of factors, has been interpreted in terms of three significant areas for action: **Consciousness,** the **Economy** and **Power**. In the area of transforming consciousness we have launched the Sama Bhavana *(Peace Meditation)* programme. In the field of economics an *Artha Dharma Vidya Programme* (Economics with an ethical foundation) in several thousands of villages. The Grama *Swarajya* ~ **Deshodaya** ~ programme is in the area of Power. Changes have to be made in all these three domains in a simultaneous, integrated and comprehensive manner. Such changes are very slow to begin with. But we believe that as more and more people are affected positively by these changes, they will gather enough momentum to influence political parties and Governments, religious leaders and institutions and usher in an era of lasting peace, harmony and prosperity for all people in our beloved country. Except this kind of a People's Pathway to Peace I cannot conceive of any other alternative.

It is in the field of "Power" that there is much misunderstanding. Hence I would like to dwell on this in a little more detail. In particular I wish to clarify what Sarvodaya is attempting to do. A few have misunderstood the Sarvodaya work as attempting to capture "political power" as is currently understood. Any one who has read and understood our publications on this will know that all along, from our very inception, Sarvodaya has denounced "Party Politics".

I may briefly summarize the position thus. For more than 50 years we have been governed by Sri Lankans and not by the British or any other foreign nation. The political power has been at the "top" and wielded by those "at the top". While there has been some

changes of the composition of the "top", it has continued to be the "top" which has governed this country. In spite of the rhetoric, the people at the bottom have had no "political power" in the sense of being a principal party to decisions, which affect their lives. Very evidently those who have governed us for over fifty years must take the responsibility for the present sad state of our country. I need not expand on the latter.

The experience of more than fifty years has shown very conclusively that the "top" has failed the country. It is extremely unlikely that cosmetic changes of the "top" will improve the "governance" of this country. Even if the "top" is bifurcated or divided into even smaller portions so long as the "top" retains the present type of party political power, the people at the bottom, be they Sinhala, Tamil or Muslim will by and large remain powerless.

The Sarvodaya attempt is to make a reality of the rhetoric to which all so vociferously subscribe, namely, give the power to the people with the top exercising only those powers, which the people are willing to give them and not the other way around. For more than the last four decades Sarvodaya has been laying a firm foundation for the people at the bottom to exercise "power" in the sense of making decisions for the development of their communities and implementing those decisions with primarily their own resources supported by educational interventions designed in consultation with the people and augmented by whatever other resources Sarvodaya was able to channel to the communities.

The Deshodaya programme, which Sarvodaya is currently engaged in implementing, implies a very significant expansion in the decision-making domains of the people. The people at the bottom are now being sensitized to the powerful forces, which dominate their lives, exercised primarily through an increasingly dominant state. People feel helpless in the face of changes they do not like. Some harmful influences they may not even be aware of. The manipulation of the collective consciousness of the people by the powerful mass media dominated by the "top" is a very insidious development which is making heavy inroads into our traditional culture based on the " the fear and the feeling of shame of doing something wrong".

To the mass media netball match is an exhibition of the female anatomy. The viewers are not educated on the finer points of the game. It is as important to show the legs of the TV announcers as their faces.

Under Deshodaya people are being educated about national-level developments, which may affect their lives adversely. Food security, access to water and access to other resources, which traditionally the people have enjoyed, may be eroded.

Expanding the decision-making domain brings with it the attendant question of implementing the decisions. An individual is helpless. A lone community may also be in the same position. A number of communities acting together may be a different proposition. Deshodaya puts such a vision before the communities. The use of modern communication technology in linking communities is being experimented with. One advantage the communities will have in implementing decisions under Deshodaya is that on the whole what is required is the collective will and not finance and material resources.

If **Deshamanya Al-haj Mohamed Abdul Bakeer Markar** is alive today I am sure he will be a foremost leader in this sort of non-party, non-political, non-sectarian and non-violent constructive approach to re-awaken our country as a shinning example to the world for peace and harmony.

I wish you all a peaceful future and thank you very much for this opportunity.

Fifth M.A, Bakeer Markar Memorial Lecture delivered on the12th September 2003 at the Mahaweli Kendra, by Dr. A T Ariyaratne Founder - President of the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement.

NIWANO PEACE FORUM

ROLES OF RELIGIOUS PEOPLE AND ORGANIZATIONS IN SITUATIONS OF CONFLICT

I wish to begin my remarks by thanking the Niwano Peace Foundation for convening this Niwano Peace Forum. The late President Nikkyo Niwano's name has already gone into history as the pioneer and the foremost promoter of inter-religious co-operation for peace in the twentieth century. We are happy that his vision and mission are carried forward into the twenty first century by his successors headed by President Nichiko Niwano and the Secretary General of the Niwano Peace Foundation Rev. Shin'ichi Noguchi. As one who knew President Nikkyo Niwano personally and as one who remembers him with deep respect and also as a past recipient of the Niwano Peace Prize, I am delighted to have been invited to deliver a keynote address at this Forum.

The theme we are discussing at this forum is "Roles of Religious People and Organizations in the Situations of Conflict." I consider Rev. Nikkyo Niwano as a role model for all genuine religious leaders and the Rissho Kosei-kai, the Niwano Peace Foundation and other related organizations he founded and headed as ideal models of religious organizations serving the cause of poverty alleviation, conflict resolution and total human well being.

INNER PEACE

We cannot successfully intervene to resolve any conflict anywhere unless we have firmly established inner peace within ourselves. In his classical work A Buddhist Approach to Peace Rev. Nikkyo Niwano explains how he went through this inner journey of purification of his mind inspired and guided by the Lotus Sutra. If I may quote him:

Needless to say that in my youth and immaturity, I made my full share of mistakes and experienced the trials that we are all heir to. But the one thing that that has made me supremely happy is the fact that I was able to gain a self-confidence that won't crack under

any difficulty. With strength and self-confidence that I receive from the Lotus Sutra, I am now, with all my heart and soul wrestling with the problem of peace.
(page 14 A Buddhist Approach to Peace)

Rev. Niwano was a devoted and practicing Buddhist. He did not have to change his religion or compromise his religious principles to work for inter-religious co-operation and peace. Neither did he want non-Buddhists to give up their faith or to compromise with their religious principles. He selected the noblest and the highest worldview that Buddhist teachings taught and followed it, which won him the trust and confidence of all other religionists. If religious harmony is to be realized he expected others to develop within their minds and hearts a loving kindness towards all that transcends man made barriers that separate people.

When followers of a particular religion rigidly flock together and get into a state of mind that all others are intrinsically separate from them and the latter too develop the same kind of a sectarian psychology slowly but surely essential religious teachings recede from the minds of people and seeds of mutual suspicion, fear, ill-will and doctrinaire differences are sown in the religious communities.

PERSONAL AND STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE

Our societies are subjected to lot of economic exploitation and political injustices. Therefore it is very easy for religions, which lose touch with spiritual awakening to become an integral part of the political and economic decadence prevailing in our societies. Thus spiritual objectives of religions are lost sight of and politicized religious groups emerge in our societies. Politicized religious leaders too emerge who do not hesitate to adopt violent means to achieve their political goals. It is common knowledge that our economic and political systems today are mostly sustained by personal and structural violence. So as a counter measure in the name of religion, violence is justified and used by these people destroying the very non-violent foundations of religions. We witness in the world today violence and counter violence and the circle of violence seems never to end. The ways certain governments also conduct themselves are no different. They too use violence and terror as a part of their agenda to achieve their own ends.

True happiness for man and society has become so illusive due to widespread violence in our society. It is my firm conviction that the first and foremost duty of peoples of religions and their religious organizations is to work towards the complete eradication of all forms of violence in our societies. When I refer to all forms of violence I mean personal as well as structural violence. In case of both these forms of violence there are multifarious factors interacting with each other that contribute to their prevalence. We have to understand and analyze them clearly and take a course of remedial actions within our power to weaken and remove these causal factors.

Rev. Nikkyo Niwano puts across this same idea in a different way. I quote:

The Lotus Sutra asserts that, in order for man to become truly happy, in addition to individual enlightenment and happiness in one's individual life, it is necessary to purify the nation (society), thus going a step further. It is in the spirit of the Lotus Sutra for a person to make efforts not to escape from actuality but rather positively wrestle with it and strive to purify it
(page 62 A Buddhist Approach to Peace)

A WORLD VIEW

Every human being should have a philosophical grounding out of which he or she lives his or her life. This is called a cosmology or worldview. Religions helped man to find a meaning to life. Most people fall short of this ideal because they mistake a sectarian goal, even if it is linked to a religion, as an ideal. True ideals are always for universal good.

Our worldviews are shaped first by our sensory contacts, sensations, perceptions, and the thoughts we generate and enhance the already conditioned stream of consciousness. Can we train our minds to watch these sensory contacts etc as they occur and guard against the creation of any negative thoughts and emotions that result in greed or ill-will which will hurt others? It is my sincere belief if religions fail to initiate this kind of mental and emotional purification process in their followers' minds they cannot contribute any thing towards resolving conflicts.

If our minds are greed oriented or harbor ill will against a person, group or race, this ignorance of reality, of the sanctity of all life, can create very powerful negative and destructive thoughts and emotions. In the extreme case a person has been known to take his or her own life or the lives of others for a so-called political or politicized-religious objective. Their minds block all non-violent alternatives. This is the same psychological process that works in people who crave after more and more sensual pleasures and commit murder, rape, robberies and other anti-social acts.

Generally speaking, in modern societies, the spiritual potential of religions does not manifest itself effectively and sufficiently to transform the mind-set of the global society. In the same token I like to state that most governments and their decision makers are spiritually blind. Therefore, the global society does not move from conflicts to harmony, poverty to no-poverty, environmental poisoning to environmental health, human rights violations to human rights protection, compilation of armaments to disarmament, and from war to peace.

Deep inner peace lies at the heart of any spiritual tradition; it is both the prerequisite and the aim of spiritual unfolding. Again and again, throughout history, the achievements of those who have acted out of this boundless reservoir of peace far surpass the achievements of the most powerful rulers. Compared to political or military power, the power of this peace is infinitely greater. But it is greater not because it is politically stronger than the most powerful ruler or carries more megatons than the atom bomb. If that were the case then it would only be a matter of time before another more powerful weapons were invented which could surpass the power of peace.

Deep, spiritual, inner peace is greater than the strongest weapon or the strongest political force because it is in itself the transcendence of conflict, so that any weapon or violence directed against it is immediately transformed into peace. In the case of Gandhi, all the power of the British Empire was brought to bear, and it was not enough to overcome his peace. In the case of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., hundreds of years of politically endorsed racist hatred were no match for his deep inner peace. We see deep peace at work again in the case of Mother Theresa, and in the case

of many, many others. They come from very different backgrounds and traditions—Gandhi was Hindu, Martin Luther King Jr. was Baptist, and Mother Theresa was Catholic, but they all arrive at the same universal peace. I don't mean to say that all religions are the same.

I know that religions are each noble and beautiful expressions of truth in their own right. But it is encouraging to see that such outwardly disparate paths have lead to the same unmistakable peace, which shakes the world. It is exhilarating to see that we human beings are ultimately so close. I am Buddhist, and so maybe if I talk with a Catholic or a Hindu we will disagree at some point; we will reach an intellectual impasse. But if we just practice our respective religions diligently, the argument will quickly disappear and there will be only profound understanding between us. And so this deep inner peace, I think it is fair to say, is the essence of all religious practice.

LEARNING TO RESPECT ALL LIFE

Religious organizations and people of religion have to make an extra special effort to accept a worldview where they respect all life and work for the well being of all. Such a condition can only be realized by placing spiritual awakening of human personalities as our highest priority in our religious agenda. In the Sarvodaya Movement from where I come we teach meditation on Loving Kindness to expectant mothers, children and all others in general. These meditational practices are conducted at the individual, family and community level. At the institutional level also we organize meditational programmes for inmates of all prisons in our country who serve short and long term sentences. Teachers and students in schools, police service officers, and executives in business establishments also make use of the meditational programmes we offer. Once a month we organize mass meditation programmes for peace where thousands of people from all faiths participate. Sowing the seeds of non-violence in the human consciousness has to be carried out consistently and with right understanding and patience.

TRANSFORMING CONSCIOUSNESS, THE ECONOMY AND POWER RELATIONSHIPS

Having spoken so far on the importance of cultivating non-violence in our own lives, families and communities I like briefly to turn our attention to a variety of structural violence prevailing in the social, economic and political life. In this Forum we will be discussing conflict-situations in many places in the world. In my view none of these conflicts was caused by one factor. There would have been several causes interacting with each other that brought about a situation of tension, conflict, violence and finally a war.

So factors pertaining to Consciousness, the Economy and Power have to be closely studied and non-violent approaches have to be developed to remove the causes that led to the conflict. Regarding Consciousness transformation I have already dealt with. What we as people can achieve in the latter two sectors also should not be underestimated. If we seriously and sincerely commit ourselves adopting non-violent means to remove social injustices and change political and economic structures at the levels we can influence, such as the grassroots level the influence it will have to build a lasting peace will not be small.

In almost all countries including the richest country America there is a segment of people who live below the poverty line. In the poorer countries millions of people live under most miserable conditions. This is a fact that people of religion cannot ignore. In fact in many of his statements Rev. Niwano made a strong plea that we should overcome our selfishness and develop benevolence towards others as a matter of gratitude because for our own existence today so many others have contributed.

LOOK FOR ALTERNATIVES

Giving handouts to the poor and engaging in social services of various kinds will not remove the causes that created a conflicting situation. Indiscriminate charity can aggravate the situation. On the other hand if we can create non-violent and sustainable alternative social, economic and political structures that can successfully deal with the roots of the problem of conflict that may be a better way to invest our energies and resources. This may be practically inconceivable at the national or macro level. But certainly at

the community level this is possible for all of us.

A good living example I can give is our own experience in Sarvodaya in Sri Lanka. For the last forty-five years we systematically developed a community-awakening programme in the villages of Sri Lanka. We cut across all caste, racial and religious barriers to inspire, train and educate villagers to satisfy their basic human needs and protect and promote their human rights and responsibilities placing reliance in their own participatory potential and resources. Rev.Niwano himself blessed this approach and Rissho Kosei-Kai, Niwano Peace Foundation and other fraternal organizations who shared our ideals gave us unstinted support uninterruptedly for over two and half decades. It was a long and painful process to attempt such a task in these violent times. Yet we are succeeding and today over 15000 villages in my country are treading this nonviolent path to build a society of their dreams. If Rev. Niwano is living today he would have called this effort on the part of several millions of people" ...Practicing the Way, aiming to achieve spiritual peace and enlightenment to establish the Land Of Serene Light...."

Today in several hundred of these villages they have their own Village Development Banks providing the needed capital to finance their righteous means of livelihood in agriculture, village industries, trade and services. They have rejected the western economic ways based on exploitation and call theirs Artha Dharma Vidya, which means Economic Science with an Ethical Foundation.

Similarly these villages are getting away from violent, divisive, confrontational system of party and power politics and are trying to build a system people's participatory governance, which they call Grama Swarajya – Village Self-governance.

I gave these two examples to inspire people of religion and religious institutions that if we have the purity of heart and work for universal good we can innovate and build alternative forms of economic and political systems which others also will adopt. I wish to emphasize at this point Sarvodaya worked on these processes without a break in spite of a ravaging war going on in our country for nearly two decades. We strictly remained uncommitted for

either side, as we believed that the real problem was between violence and non-violence. So we chose to commit ourselves more and more to strengthen the power of Non-violence in our society.

Once again I like to quote Rev.Nikkyo Niwano:

This warless state is not real peace. It is not possible to live safely for ever in such a temporary peace, even if one wishes to, because this state is not a firmly rooted peace but only a temporary respite. .....Real lasting peace is far beyond this. It is important that every human being and the various organizations formed by people abandon their wayward greed and move positively forward to the work of creation suitable for each according to the will of the universe. This means to do work appropriate to the individual, and thereby create ceaselessly those things that make oneself, others, and society as a whole happy. Such works of creation will surely produce a kind of large-scale harmony. Like an orchestra, such constant creation produces spontaneous harmony – this is lasting peace, the most precious jewel of mankind.
(page 60 A Buddhist Approach to Peace.)

While the people at large are vaguely aware of the increasing dominance of their lives by those with political and the accompanying economic power and moan the erosion of their traditional cultural spiritual values, and are strongly opposed to the increasing violence in public life, they see no viable alternative to the current political-economic system.

We should firmly believe that people have all the potential and creativity to change the scenario. What they lack is the knowledge and a movement/campaign to muster their collective will. Here, as we see it, the foremost challenge lies not so much in the political or economic lines but in the cultural spiritual. This is about bringing back the lost ethical foundations to the individual, the family and the community life. It demands a change in the spiritual core that is essential to build a healthy, humane, collective life, breaking away from the experience of being a herd of egoistic " consumers in the era of a liberalized economy" and post colonial subjects.

GLOBAL REALITIES OF TODAY

Religious people and organizations have to be vigilant about the changing international scenario as well in addition to their commitments in the local and national situations. There is hardly any nation in the world, which is not affected by the changing world economic and political trends. We have to bring back to our minds the memories of the anti-nuclear movement led by Albert Einstein and Bertrand Russell in the fifties and the First and Second World Conferences held in Hiroshima and Nagasaki against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs with Japanese initiatives. These movements are continuing to this day.

Similarly the First Conference on Religion and Peace held in Kyoto in 1970 and the Second Conference held in Louvain in 1974 led by Rev. Nikkyo Niwano and other pioneers should be remembered as landmark events in inter-religious co-operation for peace and development. These events have influenced global public opinion which in turn resulted various actions taken by the United Nations to persuade nuclear powers to agree to various resolutions regarding the testing, production and use of nuclear, chemical, biological and such other weapons of mass destruction. But the world has yet to go a long way before nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction are totally eliminated. We have to relentlessly go on creating public opinion and pressurizing our governments to work towards this ideal by strengthening United Nations so that one day we will have a Federation of Nations dedicated for total peace.

Terrorist attacks on the twin towers on September 11th 2001 and the subsequent events in retaliation such as the Iraqi war have created a very dangerous situation in international affairs where military force is being used again to resolve conflicts. Protests against the war by millions of people in America and elsewhere in the world were of no avail. I spent nearly six weeks in America last July and August and I could feel the sadness and frustrations on the part of American citizens for the present situation in their country. I traveled from the east coast to the west coast meeting hundreds of people who believe the only way they can overcome this crisis is by creating a massive country wide movement for spiritual awakening. In the meetings I addressed and the meditation programmes I conducted with the participation of people of all religious denom-

inations I too was convinced that creating a critical mass of spiritual consciousness in the American people as a whole is the only way to influence and transform the minds of decision makers from violence to non-violence. Undoubtedly religious people and their organizations have to transcend their narrow ideological barriers and self-centeredness and work together towards this spiritual goal.

EFFECTS OF GLOBALIZATION

Globalization is the most recent terminology used to create a no-poverty and prosperous world. We are aware of similar slogans placed before the world from 1960s when UN Development decades were launched. However the impact of such development decades on the poor and powerless people in the world had been negligible. Poverty and powerlessness among them had been on the increase. On the other hand the rich have become richer in almost all countries and the poor have become poorer. Multinational corporations have become more powerful and richer than the governments.

With globalization new instruments of economic power like the World Trade Organization have now come into the forefront promising a better future for all. While there may be beneficial effects of these on the poverty situation yet the overriding public opinion in the world is that they will be more harmful than good to the vast majority of the world's population. Worldwide opposition to globalization and WTO demonstrates this wherever their meetings are held.

We the people of religion have to watch carefully these developments and act intelligently and appropriately keeping in mind the well-being of those who are poor and powerless. We have to act and design ways and means of empowering the disadvantaged so that they can minimize the evil effects and maximize the advantages as we have no way of stopping this trend. Those who initiate these programmes are extremely rich and powerful and they have all the technological, communicational and capital resources at their disposal. On the other hand we do not have those resources. So this is a gigantic challenge for all of us. But I am hopeful that there is nothing that a collective mind cannot overcome and bring about the triumph of truth and justice

if we are guided by the following principles:

- As individuals follow a path of total personality awakening
- Build a spiritual force transcending religious, racial and all other divisions.
- Empower small and large communities spiritually, politically and economically.
- Contribute to build high spiritual and ethical cultures at national levels.
- Build non-violent networks at all levels in all sectors including the international level

Please have a firm conviction that we can convert our nations and the world into a Planet Of Serene Light. Bring to your mind the courage and wisdom displayed by non-violent leaders like Mahathma Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr. Both of them were violently assassinated. Countless others like them have likewise being suppressed, exiled, tortured and murdered. Many people conclude from this that the deep inner peace of these great human beings was defeated by violence. But in fact it only seems like defeat from the limited viewpoint of conflict, because in actual truth such people are invincible. People like them, struggling for peace, freedom and justice, have been repressed throughout history, but still they keep coming. No one can eliminate them. Ven.Thich Nhat Han says "A gentle smile should come to our lips when ever we hear such bad news."

A Keynote Address delivered by Dr. A.T.Ariyaratne, Founder and President Sarvodaya Movement of Sri Lanka to the Niwano Peace Forum, Tokyo, 18th October 2003

PEACE AND JUSTICE FOR ALL

The Eastern vision of our political future is not a dictatorship of the intellectual, a bourgeois oligarchy, or a proletariat autocracy, jealous of its class privileges and superimposed upon passive and inarticulate millions, but of a peasant democracy rising layer after layer from the old and essential local and functional groupings, growing from district to provincial dimensions and federated into a national assembly—a democracy which will revive the vitality of the village shrine and sacred tree under which it had a seat of old, and yet breathing a new and fresher spirit of active citizenship and sociality.

Radhakamal Mukerjee, Democracies of the East, pp. 363-4

Quoted in: Shriman Narayan, Relevance of Gandhian Economics, pp. 86-7

Introduction

I am honoured to have been invited to be a special guest at the Fourth International Conference of the Chief Justices of the World. I like to thank Mr Jagdeeesh Gandhi, the founder- manager of the City Montessori School and the convener of the conference, for inviting a rural worker like myself to address this august assembly. At the outset of my remarks I like to tell you that my only qualification to be present here with you is my lifelong endeavour to try and help rural communities in Sri Lanka and elsewhere aspire to and build a non-violent, just and egalitarian society based on the teachings of the Buddha, Mahatma Gandhi and other leaders dedicated to the Well-Being of All. With this in mind I should make some remarks on the theme Peace and Justice for All.

For nearly half a century, with my colleagues, I have tried to transform rural societies into Dharmic (righteous) societies bringing into their consciousness in very simple language a philosophy that embraces all life, simple methodologies and technologies that work for all, and, appropriate structures pertaining to their social, economic and political development that enable the ordinary people to understand and participate in their own development and welfare to ensure Peace and Justice for All in their communities. With this experience in working in 15,000 villages, I gained some insights into why current legislative, judicial and executive systems do not bring about satisfactory and adequate protection and well

being for all in an equal measure. I will try to share with you some of these thoughts along with the correctional methods of the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement which, I believe, will be useful in your deliberations.

It is my belief that in almost all countries including mine, the judiciary is held in very high respect. In Sri Lanka, a recent attempt by legislators to infringe upon the independence of the judiciary was resisted by the judiciary as a whole, lawyers and the general public. Even under dictatorial regimes the independence of the judiciary and the trust and faith that is prevailing in the consciousness of the people on the judiciary cannot be underestimated. So, even dictators have been compelled to change their ways due to this reverence people in general have for the righteous laws and justice in a country. I believe what I am saying will have a more sympathetic comprehension by Honourable Chief Justices and the other legal luminaries who are present here than by professional politicians.

Life and Teachings of the Buddha

Prince Siddhartha, the son of King Suddhodana of Kapialvasthu in ancient Nepal came to India having renounced his kingdom as well as his household life in search of the ultimate truth of life. After six years of strict meditational practices as a recluse he attained the highest level of human enlightenment. He became a 'Buddha' which means One who has attained Supreme Enlightenment. For forty five years, starting from Buddhagaya where He attained Enlightenment, He walked all over India including Lucknow where we are meeting now, teaching the Dhamma, the Truth, He discovered, to all the people including kings, queens, nobles, religious people and the ordinary men and women. He blessed the people of Sri Lanka in three visits He made which we celebrate to this day with great devotion.

I was born and bred in Sri Lanka where for nearly 2,500 years the teachings of the Buddha, the Buddha Dhamma, was practiced both by the rulers and the ruled. There were exceptions where some deviated from the Path taught by the Buddha and created chaos in our country. But whenever the rulers and the ruled adhered to the Path shown by the Buddha the country was peace-

ful and prosperous. Sri Lanka during those times was called the Dharmadweepa and Dhanyagara, an Island of Righteousness and Economic Prosperity.

What I have been doing in Sri Lanka with my colleagues and tens and thousands of rural and urban people was to try and see where, to suit into our modern complicated materialistic society, we can introduce the concepts taught by the Buddha so that we can build a more just society. The Buddha admonished us to work for the Well being of All Sentient Life. He urged us to devote our lives to help human beings as well as other sentient beings to overcome their physical and mental suffering and fear.

The Buddha recognized certain universal laws in the context of which all man-made laws should be formulated. These universal or cosmic laws are applicable in the formulation laws both in the context of national as well as international situations. Unfortunately, due to ignorance these universal laws have been ignored when framing laws even in my own country which is popularly called a Buddhist country. I am not going to elaborate on this except to say that there are higher universal laws which have to be seriously considered to supplement the existing man-made laws during present times when we have become very materialistic.

I will briefly mention the five cosmic laws Buddha taught us. Firstly, Bija Niyama, biological laws pertaining to all life forms; secondly, Uthu Niyama, physical laws pertaining to the seasons; thirdly, Kamma Niyama, moral laws pertaining to cause and effect; fourthly, Citta Niyama, psychological laws pertaining to the functions of one's mind; and fifthly, Dhamma Niyama, spiritual laws pertaining to Dhamma or all phenomena in general.

In the Karaniya Metta Sutra, the Discourse on Loving Kindness preached by the Buddha, He taught His followers, if they were to understand reality as it was and reach a supreme state of happiness, they should practice this meditation of extending loving kindness towards all sentient beings. In this Sutra the Buddha states 'In the same manner a mother loves and protects her only child even at the risk of her own life' humans should learn to love and protect all living beings. It is in this state of mind a human being can overcome

his/her ego-centricity or self-conceit, which is at the root of all craving, ill-will and ignorance. All personal, family, communal, national and international conflicts arise from these three evils that dominate the human mind. In actual fact, the Karaniya Metta Sutra which was preached nearly 2600 years ago can be considered as the first Declaration on Sanctity of All Sentient Life.

Applications of Universal Laws Leading to Justice and Peace

The principles above should be grasped with great care by the custodians of law and justice. This means that legislators should be of a very high mental caliber to understand and apply these cosmic laws when they pass legislation and see to it that they do not contravene them. In the case of judges they have to base their decisions according to the existing laws. Of course progressive judges make use the little discretionary space they have to interpret old laws in new ways in the light of universal laws that operate above those man-made. To do this they need great courage, fearlessness and innovative minds. I strongly believe that judges, if they are to uphold the independence and dignity of the judiciary, need to inculcate in their personalities a Universalist worldview which they can follow when dispensing justice. The general public will always stand by the judiciary as they intuitively know and feel when the judiciary is righteous. In fact in ancient times they always spoke about the 'Dharmadhikaranaya' – Righteous Judiciary.

This conference is focusing on the Article 51 of the Constitution of India, which states that the State shall endeavour to: (a) promote international peace and security (b) maintain just and honourable relations between nations (c) foster respect for international law and (d) encourage settlement of international disputes by arbitration. To my understanding this Article is in complete conformity with the UN Charter which is the supreme document on which all other international laws are based.

The Buddha advocated us to avoid dependence upon ideologies (*Dittinca Anupagamma*), to cultivate discipline (*Sila*), and to be equipped with a universal vision (*Dassanena Sampanno*). Ideologies always divide people, bring about dissensions and conflicts. On the other hand a universal vision which is always founded on universally applicable values unite people and bring about

understanding and unity among people and nations. The UN Charter is the foremost instrument of international law that is closest to this kind of Universal Vision. It has declared war illegal except under very exceptional situations of self-defence of a nation.

India's Emperor Ashoka practiced the concept of working for the well being of all in a large measure during the 3rd century BC. The great historian H.G. Wells called him 'the greatest of all kings.' After Dharmashoka, Ashoka the Righteous, who transformed the normative principle of Ahimsa or non-violence into the practice of good governance, Mahatma Gandhi demonstrated to the world that non-violence is the greatest weapon that could be used to defend oneself against even the most powerful empires.

Violations of Universal Laws Leading to Disaster

The recent war in Iraq, declared and executed without UN Security Council sanction, is a clear example of a violation of international law by the only super power left in the world. In a very serious global situation like this, what leadership role can the judiciary play in awakening the consciousness of small nations about their rightful place as equals in the community of nations as guaranteed by the UN Charter?

World reputed jurist and scholar on international law Judge C.G. Weeramanthri stated in his book 'Armageddon or Brave New World?: Reflections on the hostilities in Iraq,'

> The basic principle of the illegality of war, never known before, was thus established for the first time, after 3000 years of struggles, tribulations and sacrifice. This is an achievement which, if denigrated or destroyed, can scarcely be repeated except at the cost of another world war. That is the principle that is now in danger as a result of the actions of the United States and the United Kingdom in going to war on their own responsibility and in defiance of the UN Charter.

Governments have become so powerful it is not easy to change the arrogant thinking and attitudes of the people who have grasped the levers of power. Their self-conceit is an emotional attitude greatly inflated by the centralized power they wield. Nowadays, some of them are willing and eager to destroy international laws that took 3000 years to evolve, as Judge Weeramanthri has pointed out in his book. No one can predict when such arbitrary acts by

powerful governments in violation of the UN Charter might be repeated. Therefore, while trying to bring pressure on governments, not to repeat such actions, we, as civilians, as a global community of people, should do everything possible within our power to transform the consciousness of humanity as a whole from violence to non-violence, from war to peace.

At the national level, there are cases in democracies where the judiciary may nearly cease to function. In a parliamentary system, if a political party is able, by hook or crook, to dominate legislative elections for decades, that party also dominates the executive and judiciary branches. This greatly limits the independence of the judiciary, even to the point where it might cease to function according to its sacred mandate.

Gandhi's Vision of Sarvodaya Society

Mahatma Gandhi coined the word Sarvodaya, meaning the Welfare of All. He believed this should be the guiding philosophy of post-independence India. It was a vision of decentralized society based upon a Commonwealth of Village Republics. The core principles were simplicity, sanctity of labour and non-violence. His familiar saying, 'Plain living and high thinking' has evolved worldwide in the expression of green democracy, 'Think global, act local'.

Sarvodaya Society: Current Achievements

We adopted the word Sarvodaya from Mahatma Gandhi, who coined it to mean the Welfare of All. In addition we learned from the thoughts and practices of his successors, especially Acharya Vinoba Bhave and Shri Jayaprakash Narayan. With this inspiration, we built the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement of Sri Lanka, a people's movement dedicated to Awaken All Through Sharing. Today, in my country, in India and some other countries, this concept of working for all, transcending the considerations based on caste, race, colour, religion, political or other divisive factors, is accepted and programmes are devised in the context of local conditions.

The Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement is working towards economic and political institutions where power is totally decen-

tralized to rural and human-scale urban communities—what Mahatma Gandhi called a Sarvodaya Social Order. This concept guides our Movement. At this time, we are concentrating on communities where the Sarvodaya Movement is active to some degree – 15,000 communities in all.

In the villages joining the Sarvodaya Movement, the people are inspired, encouraged and educated to have unwavering faith in Simplicity, Truth and Non-violence. The teachings of the Buddha and other saints who founded great religions are taught to them to create a spiritual atmosphere in which they can work like one large family. They themselves do an appraisal of their basic human needs with the guidance of village workers trained by Sarvodaya. Then they try to satisfy their needs through self-reliance, community participation and sharing. They share their labour, skills, lands, and other material and non-material resources to satisfy these needs. In this way a people's participatory village programme is initiated with the goal of achieving human and group development through individual, family and village awakening.

Based upon extensive field experience and experiments since 1958, the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement has established a Five-Stage Model of Village Community Development. These stages, one leading to the other, are:

(1) Psychological infrastructure building,

(2) Social infrastructure building,

(3) Formation of a legally incorporate society in the village,

(4) Access to economic development services, and

(5) Assisting other villages with their upliftment.

It may be appropriate here to give a brief description of each of these stages.

Stage 1: In the beginning, the community is loose knit, without any organization or sense of direction. Villagers from the village itself and Sarvodaya volunteers from neighbouring villages participate in Shramadana Camps to provide the village with essential services such as roads, wells, irrigation canals, etc., with an emphasis on the mutual benefit of the community. The experience

of Shramadana is often expressed by the saying, 'we build the road, the road builds us'.

The initial self-help work, inspired and supported by the organizational structure of Sarvodaya, brings the community together and demonstrates its power in collective and constructive activities. This establishes the psychological infrastructure for the subsequent stages. Also, at this point, individuals with leadership talent can be recognized.

Stage 2: Peer groups are formed, including mothers, children, youth, farmers and elders. Mothers' and children's groups tend to be the most active. Foremost members of peer groups are given leadership training on child-care, health, nutrition and sanitation so that they can effectively participate in basic needs satisfaction programmes. A village child-care centre/community kitchen generally arises during this stage. Nearly 7000 preschools take care of the needs of about 160,000 children daily. Similarly in every village, children of school-going age are formed into groups where they meet after school hours and are engaged in learning about non-violence, peace and justice through non-formal educational programmes where song and dance, art and drama, and community meditation are widely used. So are the Youth and Women's groups.

Stage 3: Through self-reliance and community participation, basic needs in the village are satisfied and a village level Sarvodaya Shramadana Society is formed, registered under government regulations. This entity gives organized leadership to all village-level activities that lead to the improvement of living standards. The Society, as a legal entity, can hold property, open bank accounts and enter into written contracts of other kinds.

Stage 4: Sarvodaya Economic Enterprise Development Services (SEEDS) is introduced to the village, progressively developing the capacity of villagers to save, invest, borrow, improve existing enterprises, start new ones, repay loans and evolve their own village development bank. Technical services are also available for infra-structural development work such as village roads, water services schemes, sanitary facilities, housing, irrigation and so on.

Stage 5: The village is both able to meet the costs of its own services and extend help to weaker neighbouring villages. In addition, it is able to co-operate with other villages in mutually beneficial tasks.

Currently, more than 5,000 villages have access to the services of SEEDS and about 900 villages now have their own Sarvodaya Development Bank—an awesome achievement when you consider the steep mountain the villagers had to climb to get to that point. Annually, the Social Division of Sarvodaya prepares about 100 villages to qualify for the much-valued services of SEEDS.

SEEDS itself is based upon the principle of Economic Science with Ethical Foundation. Its mission statement reads: 'To eradicate poverty by promoting economic empowerment for a sustainable livelihood'. This permeates all three of its divisions: Banking, Enterprise Services and Training Services.

Sarvodaya Society: The Next Phase

Sarvodaya received a big boost when, in 1972, an Act of Parliament authorized the establishment of Sarvodaya Shramadana Societies as legal entities. With more than a generation of experience behind us under the terms of that law, we believe the time has come to move closer to the Gandhian ideal of a Commonwealth of Village Republics. In the next phase of the evolution of Sarvodaya, we intend to establish Grama-Swaraj, Village Self-Governance as an essential ingredient for Deshodaya, National Awakening.

Deshodaya implies the continuation and deepening of our work enhanced by a new initiative to build power alliances between and among communities. We envision a system of independent village/urban communities working in concert with each other, specially to bring about a new political culture—from the village level up. Modern communications technologies have developed to the point where this Gandhian dream can become a reality. In fact Sarvodaya has a specialized division helping the advanced villages to establish their own Tele Centres.

Deshodaya has two main features: non-violent methods of action and full direct participation of people in decision-making. Such political culture can specialize in the satisfaction of basic

human needs, guarantee basic human rights and ensure sustainable development of life.

It is clear that a full participatory political system may be established only by basing it upon a relatively small unit of power. When one considers the theoretical, historical, sociological, cultural and geographic aspects of the problem, one comes to the conclusion that the village in Sri Lanka is the best level to be regarded as the primary unit of power.

Grama-Swaraj will have to be established by the people themselves through a non-violent and consensual political process. Routine and extraordinary affairs will have to proceed through the same method. A Grama-swaraj will be characterized by all the basic attributes defining a government: decision-making, executing and monitoring. We can learn very much from the ancient Gram Sabha systems we had in Sri Lanka as well as from the ancient village republics of India (such as Licchavis and Vajjins) where not only advanced legislative and executive systems functioned but there was a very just and efficient system to dispense justice equally for all.

A Grama-Swaraj will not be an isolated power unit. While enjoying the autonomy to run community affairs on its own terms, clusters of Grama-swarajs will form functioning networks. We anticipate significant synergy effects from this arrangement.

This can be understood as the inverse of the top-down model dominant in the world today. Since the village will be the basic political unit, they will delegate powers to upper units when functions can be accomplished more successfully at those levels. Shri Jayaprakash Narayan, the great socialist and Sarvodaya leader, has spoken and written very widely on this system of people's participatory system of governance.

With the spreading of Grama-Swaraj Networks across the nation, democratic norms can take root and human awakening can proceed much more effectively than under current political and cultural conditions. Perhaps this may be a concept valid for all nations where people's participatory power, if tried successfully, can enhance the spirit of the UN Charter and check any big powers

from repeating the kind of unilateral action they took in Iraq resulting in such human suffering.

We have coined the word Vishvodaya, meaning Awakening of the Global Community, as our vision for the world. We believe that the re-awakening of the spiritual potential of humanity, the full utilization of the available communication technologies to link the self-governing communities in the world and the devolution of economic and political power to the level of people can transform our world.

> As Lewis Mumford points out [in his Transformation of Man, p. 182], in the process of transforming man and the society, the new world culture may bring about "a fresh release of spiritual energy that will unveil new potentialities, no more visible in the human self today than radium was in the physical world a century ago, though always present.
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> [Shriman Narayan, Relevance of Gandhian Economics, p. 183]

With this vision in mind, we hope to cultivate 1,000 existing Sarvodaya Shramadana Villages to pioneer along these lines. What better tribute could we pay to Mahatma Gandhi? What better service could we provide to Sri Lanka and the world? What better future can we offer the children of the world than their survival with Justice and Peace?

Talk delivered by Dr. A.T. Ariyaratne at the Fourth International Conference of Chief Justices of the World From 12-14th December 2003 held in Lucknow, India. Organized by City Montessori School, Lucknow.

Dr. A.T. Ariyaratne is the Founder and the President of the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement of Sri Lanka. For his Peace and Humanitarian Services he was awarded many international prizes including the Ramon Magsaysay Award (Phillipines 1969), King Bouduwin Prize for International Development (Belgium 1982), Niwano Peace Prize (Japan 1990), Mahatma Gandhi Peace Prize (India 1996)

SARVODAYA AND THE WAY IT INFLUENCES THE MIND, DAILY LIFE AND SOCIETY

At the outset I wish to thank the German Buddhist Union for inviting me to speak at their Annual Congress. I am delighted that more than 50 Buddhist organizations from different Buddhist traditions are participating at this Congress in Wuppertal. The theme you have selected, namely, "Inner Peace – Outer Peace" is very timely as we are living in a world in which humans are confused, disturbed and are suffering from inner as well as outer conflicts. Unless inner peace is firmly established we can never think of a world without external conflicts. This is exactly what the Buddha taught us 2600 years ago.

"Manopubbangama dhamma
Manosettha manomaya
Manasa ce padutthena
Bhasati va karoti va
Tato nam dukkamanveti
Cakkam va vahato padam"

The meaning of this Pali stanza is:

"Mind is the forerunner of (all evil) states. Mind is chief; mind-made are they. If one speaks or acts with wicked mind, because of that, suffering follows one, even as the wheel follows the hoof of the draught-ox.

Then the Exalted One continues with a second stanza:

"Manopubbangama Dhamma
Manosettha manomaya
Manasa ce pasannena
Bhasati va karoti va
Tato nam sukhamanveti
chaya va anapayini ".

Which means –

"Mind is the forerunner of (all good) states. Mind is chief; mind-made are they. If one speaks or acts with pure mind, because of that,

happiness follows one, even as one's shadow that never leaves".

(Dhammapada)

The lesson we learn from this teaching is that if we can put our mental faculties right then everything else in the world would be put right.

The Chairman of the Organizing Committee, Rev. Heinz-Jurgen Metzger, asked me to speak about the Sarvodaya Movement in Sri Lanka where we are trying to build both inner peace and outer peace based on the Teachings of the Buddha.

Sarvodaya is a word coined by Mahatma Gandhi meaning the well being of all. He combined two Sanskrit words Sarvam meaning 'all' and *Udayam* meaning 'well-being' and coined the compound word Sarvodaya. After independence in India he expected for people to realize a social order, which would work for the well being of all rather than for the well being of a minority or a majority. In the development process he wanted the lowest, lowliest and the lost in society to benefit equally as any others.

AWAKEN ALL BY SHARING

When we in Sri Lanka started a Movement in 1950s to work for the well being of all by sharing our time, thoughts, efforts, knowledge and other resources to build a society that works for all we first called that Movement the Shramadana Movement which literally meant a movement for sharing to bring about the well being all. Subsequently, to give a philosophical meaning to what we were doing we adopted the word Sarvodaya which *Gandhiji* had coined and gave it the Buddhist interpretation of *"Awakening of All"*.

The Buddha means the Supremely Awakened One. Following the teachings of the Buddha all human beings can attain a state of full enlightenment. We attempted to translate this lofty ideal of the awakening of all into practice taking the teachings of the Buddha as found in our traditional scriptures. Therefore, Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement in Sri Lanka can also be described as an attempt to practice Buddha's teachings in the fields of development, welfare and social transformation. Some call this Engaged Buddhism.

In Buddhist teachings we are asked to work for the removal of Physical suffering, Fear and Mental suffering of all sentient beings.

Dukkappththa ca Niddukkha
Bhayappatha ca Nibbhaya
Sokappaththa ca Nissoka
Honthu Sabbepi Panino

May those who suffer physically overcome that suffering
May those who suffer from fear overcome fear
May those who suffer from mental pains overcome them
May all sentient beings be well and happy

If we are to realize Bodhi or the highest level of intelligence (or *Buddhi*) that any human mind has the capacity to attain, we have to serve all living beings and help them to overcome physical, mental and emotional suffering. This truly is the Bhodisatva ideal. This is our supreme goal and it may also be called the total personality awakening. We can never attain this goal only by acquiring knowledge, but we have to follow a process of purifying our mind and giving up of the defilements we have acquired in our *sansaric journey* of numerous births and deaths. Because of these defilements deep within our minds we have developed a conceit of self which can only be destroyed by progressively cultivating selflessness (*Dana*), morality (*Sila*) and meditation (*Bhavana*). Morality or Sila, Concentration of mind or Samadhi through *Bhavana* help us to develop wisdom or *Panna* which helps us to understand the reality of the life within us, the society in which we live and the living and non-living environment around us. Such a development of wisdom will ultimately lead us to live with peace in our minds, in our societies and in our environment.

A HOLISTIC APPROACH

We started the Sarvodaya Movement in 1958 appealing people to come forward and gift whatever they can, their labour, their lands, their skills, their wealth etc. to alleviate the suffering of the poorest and the powerless people living in our rural and urban communities. Harnessing these resources which people were voluntarily prepared to sacrifice for the well being of the less fortunate we were able to construct wells to provide drinking water, irrigation tanks and

canals to provide water for the cultivation of lands to produce food, shelter for people who had no houses to live, access roads to villages, community centres, schools and such other community facilities in education and health care. In other words, depending on self-reliance and community participation on the part of the people the Sarvodaya Movement initiated a scientific and integrated community development programme, which would benefit people through their own participation as well as from beneficence (*dana*) on the part of others who were ready to give them a helping hand.

It is this Movement that progressively expanded into a country-wide people's movement of national revival based on the values of Buddhism. We were inspired by the examples set by good ancient kings who followed the Buddha Dhamma to build what they called at that time a land of economic prosperity (*Dhanyagara*) and spiritual richness (*Dharmadvipa*), an island of righteousness. Today, after 45 years of ups and downs we have become the strongest people's organization for national revival based on Buddhist values. We operate in more than 15,000 villages of Sri Lanka, which is more than half the number of village communities in the country. These villages have both Buddhist and non-Buddhist people with whom Sarvodaya work in greater understanding and harmony.

We work in six integrated sectors, namely, spiritual, moral, cultural, social, economic and political. We try to show that we can build an alternative society based on the teachings of the Buddha as applicable to the challenges of the 21st century. At the same time we have succeeded in developing programmes at six levels, namely, personality awakening, family awakening, rural community awakening, urban community awakening, national awakening and global awakening. It is our belief that the concept of *Bodhi* that is the highest awakening of the human mind or the human society can be realized if we work diligently with these objectives in mind. All we are trying to do is to demonstrate to the best our ability that this can be done in the present confused and disturbed world if we rightly understand and interpret the Buddha's teachings and translate them into practice.

INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP AWAKENING

When a human being participates in any of the Sarvodaya activities, we stress that his or her primary objective should be to practice

four principles of Personality Awakening, which the Buddha has taught us. The first principle is Loving Kindness (*Metta)* towards all beings. The Buddha in the Discourse on Loving Kindness (*Karaniya Metta Sutra*) has taught us the importance of respecting and preserving all sentient beings. From one celled living beings to the most evolved of living beings such as the humans friendliness and respect have to be extended. Therefore, anybody joining the Sarvodaya Movement is a person who accepts the principle not to destroy sentient beings, but to protect all life.

This thought of Loving Kindness or *Metta* is translated into Compassionate Action (*Karuna*) by undertaking physical or mental activities to alleviate the suffering of humans and other sentient beings, whether it is by digging wells or building schools or helping the sick or educating the children or improving the economic life of all people or teaching the Dhamma to improve their spiritual life. All these actions are expressions of compassion. Such a human being invariably gets the maximum mental impact from such meritorious deeds in the form of dispassionate or Altruistic Joy (*Muditha*). When over a period of time human actions are guided by these three principles of *Metta, Karuna* and *Muditha,* such a person can progressively develop a state of mind which does not get disturbed by loss or gain, name or blame, success or failure. This stable state of mind is called equanimity (*Upekkha*). Thus in a very simplified way Sarvodaya provides four guiding principles for those who volunteer to work for the awakening of all. In trying to help to awaken all one awakens one self simultaneously.

When large groups of people get together in communitarian work they are guided by the four Buddhist principles of Sharing (*Dana*), Pleasant Language (*Priya Vacana*), Constructive Activity (*Artha Carya*) and Equality (*Samanathmatha*). So, in the Sarvodaya Movement, in their daily life people are imbibed with these eight principles, which become a part of their daily personal and social conduct. This means that a culture of non-violence is inculcated in the community by direct and constructive activities, which benefit the people as a whole.

The 15,000 Sarvodaya villages where we are working do not exist in isolation from other communities. Sarvodaya villages as well as others are conflict-ridden. They may be due to

economic, social, political, linguistic, religious or racial divisions.

SPIRITUAL, MORAL AND CULTURAL AWAKENING

Without emphasizing on these divisive elements we emphasize on commonalities. In our development education programmes we teach community leaders to identify the Basic Needs in their villages and train them in methods, techniques and skills to satisfy these needs physically with their own endeavours. Similarly, these leaders are educated in principles of Human Rights and Responsibilities so that in their own communities universally acknowledged humanitarian principles can be cultivated. In other words without any outsider advocating how they should act, they themselves awaken to their needs, rights and responsibilities. This is a difficult process in a world where politically and economically privileged groups try to impose their will on the people. But in the villages where we are working we have demonstrated that people, however much they are poor and powerless, have the potential to overcome their poverty and powerlessness if they diligently follow the teachings of the Buddha. "You are your own salvation" (*Atthahi Atthanonatho*).

I should explain briefly what I mean by spiritual, a moral and cultural foundation of our work is. Without a psychological and cultural infrastructure where these three elements are strongly bound together we do not believe that any worthwhile, non-violent and constructive social, economic or political progress is possible. By spiritual awakening we mean the purification of the human mind from greed, ill will and illusions.

If I may quote a well-known Sri Lankan Buddhist scholar, Mr Bogoda Premaratne –

"Mind is regarded as the seat of consciousness that brings to light all perceptions of things, feelings, thoughts and volitions. Buddha teaches that what we call mind or a "*citta*" is only a union between a perception gained through the senses and a feeling generated in the heart (*Sanna ca Vedana*). Thus the mind is what coordinates the functions of the heart and the head. Mind prepares all programmes out of the raw material or data brought in by the sense organs of the head and the body, always, invariably, mixed with a component of feeling generated by the heart. It is the mind that thinks, imagines,

forms concepts, ideas, ideologies, opinions and views. The intelligence of the mind can be employed both for good and evil."

The essence of spiritual awakening is purifying the impurities in our consciousness which builds an egotism or self-conceit in us which we identify as "I - mine and - myself". All our cravings for power, position, status, wealth etc originate from this egotism. Living with others with similar egotistic tendencies naturally brings about competition, ill will, hatred and finally violent inter personal conflicts. When a person goes through a spiritual awakening process these egotistic tendencies are reduced and their inter personal relationships become more healthy. By moral awakening we mean such friendly relationships, which bring about cooperation among human groups and societies. When all the thoughts, words, actions, art and architecture, music, drama, singing and life patterns and so on are taken as a whole we call it a culture. With improved spiritual and moral life the culture itself becomes healthy and non-violent. In our work we emphasize the building up of a spiritual, moral and cultural infrastructure as a pre-requisite for building social, economic and political structures, which would lead to peaceful and progressive societies.

There are innumerable discourses preached by the Buddha like the *Maha Mangala Sutra* (The Great Discourse of Success Generators) and *Para Bhava Sutra* (Discourse on the Conduct of people that leads to Degeneration and Suffering in Human and Social Life). Similarly, *Singalovada Sutra*, which teaches us the kind of relationships we should have between husband and wife, parents and children, employers and employees, teachers and students and friends, provides us with plenty of Buddha's teachings to improve our social relationships. There is also such a wealth of teachings pertaining to education, health, environment, politics and economic life relevant to the present times. In the Sarvodaya Movement we are attempting to apply these teachings for the improvement of family, community and national life.

INVOLVING ALL AGE GROUPS

In the Sarvodaya Movement we pay great attention to design programmes for various age groups. For example there is a programme for pre-natal childhood. In this programme which is conducted vol-

untarily by a consultant gynecologist and an experienced meditation teacher at Vishva Niketan, which is the Sarvodaya Centre for Universal Peace and Meditation, pregnant mothers and their husbands are being taught to communicate with the unborn through ancient practices and meditation for healthy development of the unborn. Similarly special programmes are conducted for children of pre-school going age, school children, adolescents, young adults and grown up people. At the village community level there are formations of children, youth, women, farmers and others, all of whom are related to basic human need satisfaction programmes as well as to training in human rights and responsibilities. To train the trainers for our villages we have established 8 Development Education Institutes, which are, assisted by 34-district level and 345 divisional level Sarvodaya Centres.

Having continuously developed this movement over a period of five decades I believe it is appropriate for me to make certain remarks taking the country as a whole as to the influence of Sarvodaya philosophy, principles and its activities. Statistically over 70% of people in Sri Lanka are said to profess Buddhism. There is hardly any place in the country where ancient Buddhist monuments or monasteries are not found. There are over 36,000 Buddhist monks attending to the religious needs of people today. Religious ceremonies and activities are going on continuously. The teachings of the Buddha are found in its most pristine form in Dhamma texts. Even non-Buddhist layman and politicians liberally quote chapter and verse from the Buddha's words in their public utterances. When one sees and hears all this, one gets the impression or I would say the illusion that Sri Lanka is a Buddhist country.

To my mind, to call Sri Lanka a Buddhist country and then to put the blame for every kind of immoral act or incident of violence or denial of human rights, on Buddhists is not fair. Even though historically and culturally Sri Lanka may claim to be Buddhist, in my opinion, certainly the way political and economic structures are instituted and managed today can hardly be called Buddhist either in precept or practice. We have simply implanted social, economic and political systems borrowed from the imperial powers who dominated us for nearly five centuries. Sarvodaya is trying to go back to our roots and values and try to rebuild an alternative social structure, which we can call our own.

FOUR EVILS AND POLITICS

Let me have a look at the political structure. It is based on the so-called party system, which has been adopted from the west. Political parties in practice promote, what is called in Buddhism the four defilements, namely, *chanda, dvesha, bhaya* and *moha*. By *chanda* we mean the bringing about of alienation between one another in the minds of the people. The existing caste, linguistic, racial, communal or other differences are surreptitiously and sometimes openly used by political parties to promote their own self-interest, instead of promoting compassion and the idea of well-being of all in the minds of people. Therefore, the political parties hold a notorious record for promoting alienation among the people of Sri Lanka.

Dvesha is ill will, which is the direct result of the aforementioned alienation. Organized gossip, rumours, falsehoods and so on supplement various kinds of apparently democratic, political and economic propaganda, carried out by most of the leaders of political parties. While the political elite may have a common understanding of the game they play according to their own rules, the unwary ordinary people fall prey to their machinations and develop longstanding enmities and irreconcilable conflicts. This explains the origin of a lot of the violent confrontations we witnessed in Sri Lanka during the last six decades.

The third characteristic, *bhaya*, is fear. In post- independent Sri Lanka while an unjust, unhealthy and a borrowed party political system was kept going for the benefit of a small class of people, to whatever party they belonged, mutual suspicion and fear among common people also kept gathering momentum. The so-called 1983 "communal" violence was promoted by a handful of politically powerful people who were in a microscopic minority. Yet, they were able to rouse this spirit of mutual fear in most people and they kept them away from any constructive intervention to prevent the escalation of that violence.

Of course there was a negative kind of intervention on the part of some educated people, interventions in the form of scholarly analyses based on a hoard of statistical data and historical facts. I call this mostly negative intervention because they did not affect in any way the thinking of either the man on the street or our structurally violent

political and economic structure that promoted the situation of disharmony and conflict. In other words, philosophizing that does not touch the basic roots of mental defilements and a social remedy resulting from them. In Buddhist terminology, this is simply called *moha* or ignorance. When ignorance becomes organized, and one calls it social science, it is a disaster for communities who have a right to expect more positive interventions from the more educated sectors. We saw a situation for twenty years in Sri Lanka of different groups holding onto their own uncompromising positions while the sound of guns and explosions continued to be heard.

A NEW ECONOMIC ORDER

The economic goals, structures and processes that are officially promoted are not, in my opinion, conducive to building peace in a Buddhist way. Promoting consumerism is one extreme, which Lord Buddha rejected as *Kamasukhallikanuyoga* (*Excessive indulgence in the satisfaction of five sebnes*). Since independence the country has been drawing away from the Middle Path which is neither self-indulgence nor self-mortification. Four hundred and fifty years of western influence and rule, the deliberate promotion of the materialistic way of life and the existence of a small elite group who have achieved that affluent level, have made the general population also aspire to achieve material prosperity as their sole aim in life. But few succeed. Most end up in a situation worse than they were in before. With the introduction of the so-called free market economy during the last two decades and with plenty of imported consumer goods floating around, everyone is bent on making quick money to acquire these non-essentials. Malnutrition is on the increase; crime is on the increase; the cost of living is skyrocketing and bribery and corruption have taken unprecedented proportions.

When any kind of social unrest sets in, there are small gangs of undisciplined people who take advantage of the situation. These are mostly teenagers who have had no proper schooling or education in cultural values. But the advertising media have conditioned their minds to desire various material things. They go on a rampage of looting and arson at the slightest opportunity. This is what happened in July 1983 in many places in Sri Lanka. Some young people looted television sets from shops and only after taking them home to their shanty dwellings did they realize that they had neither electric-

ity nor a place to keep them. Then they smashed them on the ground. This kind of psychological reaction is a clear example of the frustrations developed in people who see a consumerist society around them, but are denied the opportunities to be a part of it.

So the economic environment is not conducive to the mental peace and contentment of individuals and communities when it is supported by a vicious power-oriented political system. In a Buddhist society, neither political nor economic activities promoted by the State should contradict the Teachings of the Buddha. Furthermore, in both these fields of human activity there are teachings that can guide a state dedicated to following the teachings of the Buddha. Primarily a Buddhist has to abstain from killing, stealing, committing adultery, lying and consuming intoxicants. When all five injunctions are formally promoted directly or indirectly by the State it is far from building a Buddhist economy. When speaking of economic development, Lord Buddha not only stressed the importance of increased efficiency in production (*Uttana Sampada*), but also the importance of the protection of resources and the environment (*Arakkha Sampada*), a friendly social milieu in which economic activities should take place (*Kalyana Mittata*) and a wholesome lifestyle towards which all the economic activities are directed (*Sama Jeevakata*).

Production and consumption do not constitute the totality of life and society. They are the material foundation on which higher objectives pertaining to human life and culture are to be attained. The way in which production, distribution, consumption, technology, and marketing are carried out determines whether these higher objectives are promoted or hampered. The economy in Sri Lanka makes it very difficult to realize these higher aspirations. The lack of a spiritual balance is resulting in widespread ecological and environmental problems, which in turn affect the thinking and conduct of human beings.

Since Nineteen Eighties Sarvodaya is trying out its own economic development methods in villages. Already in over 5000 of the 15000 villages where Sarvodaya is active Sarvodaya Economic Enterprises Development Services (SEEDS) are tried out. Based on the Buddhist economic principles these activities are conducted in agriculture, small industries and services. Savings and credit pro-

grammes, Enterprise Development and needed Technical training are provided through SEEDS which is an independent legal entity of the Sarvodaya Movement. Nearly 900 Sarvodaya Village Development Banks also have been established and these are fully owned and operated by incorporated village societies. These banks provide the much needed capital for the people for their economic activities. We have named this kind of economic philosophy on which our economic activities are based Artha Dharma Vidya meaning An Economic Science with Buddhist Ethical Foundations.

VILLAGE SELF-GOVERNANCE

In the political field without getting involved in party and power politics the Sarvodaya Movement is promoting an alternative kind of direct political participation by the people. This is an attempt to build self-governing village communities. This we call Grama Swarajya or Village Self Governance. During the time of the Buddha there were such village republics such as those of *Lichchavis* and *Vajjins*. We were inspired by both these political units which Buddha himself praised as well as Gandiji's teachings where he conceived Grama Swarajya as the most democratic form of governance for the people. We have opened a Grama Swarajya School and have started conducting course for village leaders.

For the last five decades Sarvodaya has been in the forefront to bring about peace and harmony in the country. The Sarvodaya approach to peacemaking is twofold. Firstly, the movement tries to re-establish a value system while promoting technologies and structures that would lead to a sustainable society. Secondly, the Movement addresses itself to the problems that need immediate attention even though their origin is in the present arrangement of the political, economic and social structure of our society. The latter programme is something like bringing relief, rehabilitation and reconciliation to people who have been affected by violence. The former is an attempt to remove the causes that have brought about the present state of unrest

Mass Meditations

It is appropriate to mention here, briefly, the technique of community meditation that the members of the Sarvodaya Movement practice. It has five steps. Firstly, relaxing of the body with the mind;

Secondly, maintaining attention at the tip of the nostrils while observing the breathing in and out; Thirdly, expressing loving kindness towards one's body and mind and progressively extending it towards the near and dear ones and then to all others including the ones who are disliked; Fourthly, attempting to link up with other human beings and those who live in other planes of existence who practice similar forms of universal loving kindness; Fifthly, directing all the thought energies consciously towards justice and world peace.

During the last two decades Sarvodaya has conducted over 150 mass meditation programmes in different parts of the country in each of which from 3,000 people to 650,000 people have participated. In all nearly 2.7 million people participated in these mass meditations. We strongly believe the influence we made in the consciousness of the people towards non-violence and loving kindness has made its impact on the conflicting parties, which has today brought about a ceasefire. We continue this meditational exercise almost every day in some place in the country and also on a mass scale at least once a month. Unless we create a critical mass of spiritual consciousness in our society as a whole we will not be able to build lasting peace. The transformation of consciousness, the economy and the power structure, we believe, are the three components that have to be simultaneously promoted to realize a state of lasting peace in our country.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

In Sri Lanka all the citizens in the past 23 years became victims directly or indirectly of the on going conflict. The most violent communal conflict ever, occurred in July 1983. Within twenty-four hours, Sarvodaya went into action facing all the risks involved in the general atmosphere of insane violence. There were neither organizations nor leaders, official or otherwise, who had the courage to publicly condemn the violence and to call for sanity during the critical days following the violence, except for the leadership of the Sarvodaya Movement. It was with their open commitment amidst threats from extremists that they opened the first refugee camps for affected Tamils, encouraged and supported government ministries to come out and help the victims, and even toured the whole country including the North and the East to render relief and to appeal for sanity so that further escalation of violence could be prevented. This

commitment and sacrifice would never have been possible if it were not for the holistic approach that the Movement had been building during the preceding two and a half decades.

The two months that followed the July 1983 violence was a tense period and even the best of friends among Sinhalese and Tamils abstained from openly mixing together. But Sarvodaya workers in all parts of the country openly went about their work together without any racial differences and they contributed in an immeasurable manner to allay the mutual fears. In 1983 August itself, at the Sarvodaya Headquarters, the first public meeting on the communal violence to be covered by the media was held. This was followed by a historic conference held on the first and second of October 1983 at the Bandaranaike Memorial International Conference Hall in Colombo. Attendance was nearly two thousand civic leaders of all races, dignitaries of all religions including the Mahanayakes of all Buddhist Sects. A historic document titled "A People's Declaration for Mutual Peace and Harmony" was discussed and adopted unanimously. All present became signatories to this document. The recommendations in that document became the peace programme of Sarvodaya Movement In years that followed.

The Sarvodaya Shanti Sena (Peace Brigade) Division, which aims at national harmony and cooperation, has engaged itself in many an experiment. One important project is to involve a Sinhala youth from the South, male or female, with a Tamil youth from the North in community service for a period of three months in the village of one of them and to repeat the experiment in the other's village. Here, while they learn each other's language, customs and habits, they also grasp their needs. These first meetings often lead to further opportunities to exchange their views with mutual understanding. As a result, whatever grave conflicts arise among others in the country, these young men and women never contribute to the damage. Rather, they strengthen links in the cause of mutual understanding. Amidst grave risks, dangers and threats they courageously continue to this day to serve according to their means, protecting lives, making available relief services, and succoring to the afflicted and arresting the sowing of the seeds of hatred. This type of reconciliation is already an accomplished fact in the areas in the turbulent North and East, where thousands of families have been resettled with

Sarvodaya initiative, long before the present official resettlement programmes started. At present Sarvodaya is working on a programme known as 'Village to Village and Heart to Heart' Programme where 1000 villages in the South are linked to 1000 villages in the North and East.

PEACE

Conflict has power over us only insofar as we ourselves give it that power. In the future, if we survive the current age, I think the deep spiritual peace we are talking about here will blossom explicitly to imbue into every aspect of reality, accompanied by this simple clarity pervading all human interactions and situations on a global scale. For now, it is the role of people based in a strong religious practice like in Buddhism to cultivate this clarity and be witness to it. More often than not, a strong religious practice is not present in society, people are cut off from those deep natural reservoirs of peace, and so when a problem arises it quickly degenerates into a conflict. One group may begin thinking that the second group is hoarding the food unfairly, or the second group may feel unwilling to give their surplus away to a group of people who did not work to harvest it. Like this they take sides and make themselves miserable with bickering. Each side may have the idea that they are struggling for justice, but it is a justice divorced from the very source of justice. Mistrust, anger, frustration, paranoia narrow their minds and impoverish their justice and their good. In this state of mind, even if a solution arises, the conflict projects itself onto the solution. As soon as we return to our spiritual peace, there is no problem. But falling out of touch with this peace, there is no solution. Perhaps then a third party mediator enters the scene to resolve the conflict, but if their good intentions are not grounded in the deep inner peace of spiritual practice, then they too are quickly swept up into conflict. The task of these mediators is difficult. Perhaps they catch a glimmer of the astounding simplicity of the solution, but they try and reconcile it with the outward political complexity, not understanding that they are mutually exclusive.

The greatest message that Sarvodaya gives to the world in the 21st century is the message of peace and tolerance. Such a message can only be realized when it begins in the human heart. It should thus begin in the individual and then flow to the family, community, soci-

ety and the world. Toleration of others, equality and sharing of resources and power without the exploitation of human being by others is the final objective. Violence should be eschewed at all levels. It is in such a context where we learn to tolerate our differences and refrain from exploiting others that a new world order may be created. Sarvodaya is searching for strategies to build such a world order. It possesses a tested strategy to achieve this objective. Can we all coming from all parts of the world realize the importance of this objective and muster sufficient courage and strength to put this strategy to action? In this unique exercise all of us may not reach Nirvana; but I am sure for most of us the world then could be a more satisfactorily fulfilling and beautiful place to live in.

A speech delivered by Dr. A.T. Ariyaratne, President of the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement, at the Annual Congress of the Deutsche Buddhistische Union on October 24~26, 2003, Wuppertal,Germany

Damsak Mandira, Sarvodaya Headquarters, Moratuwa, Sri Lanka.

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES IN AN INDIVIDUALISTIC ERA: A BUDDHIST PERSPECTIVE

I am happy to be back at Mitra Niketan. Mitra Niketan to me is not a pre-industrial community. It is a community, which I like to call a post-industrial community. This is the kind of sustainable community the third millennium needs for the survival of humankind in a livable natural environment. So I am not surprised that the Mitra Niketan People's College has selected the subject "Social Responsibilities in an Individualistic Era" as the theme of this International Conference held in co-operation with the Association of Danish Folk High Schools. I am honoured to be a participant at this opening ceremony and thank you for the opportunity given to me to make the Keynote Address.

The founder of Mitra Niketan Sri Vishvanathan has been a guru, an elder brother and an inspiration to me from the time I met him over three decades ago. Both of us have grown old and yet our youthful spirit keeps us going and we are still working shoulder to shoulder with our young brothers and sisters in our respective communities at Mitra Niketan in India and Sarvodaya in Sri Lanka. The secret of our youthful spirit may be the sweet blood that both of us have, flowing through our arteries and veins. We have this sweetness in common and whenever we meet we share the notes as to how to control this sweetness in a world where human beings are becoming increasingly bitter towards one another. Of course we take our daily dose of insulin. But we know that no amount of glucose will make bitter people in this world sweet.

Like a cancerous disease, organized greed is spreading across our global community. Organized greed is followed up by organized hatred, which begins with small conflicts in communities and spreads across countries as bloody conflagrations.

Individual greed and hatred is an evil that pollutes individual human minds. When groups of individuals particularly those who have immense economic and military power collectively get organized, it takes global proportions, endangering humanity, the rest of the living world and nature itself and threatens to bring all of us to an inevitable catastrophe.

In reference to the theme of this conference, I believe what you mean by an Individualistic Era is a period in human civilization where individual greed and competition become dominant forces. In this sense, there is no doubt that we live in an individualistic era. The social and economic forces of our time emphasize that happiness and the good life can be found only by satisfying all of our individual desires. The individual is encouraged to climb the ladder of success, to be assertive and to attend to his or her self-interest. Privatization and Globalization are the respectable terms that are used to sell this concept and these practices to the people. The promotional organizations for this purely materialistic approach are the most powerful forces in the world. They are the powerful governments, the World Bank, the IMF, and other related transnational institutions. The United Nations Organization, with all its good intentions is weak, compared to the resources at its disposal. However the UN as a forum is useful to promote ethical and social values and humanistic considerations in spite of its limited scope to act effectively to bring about an impact on the big players.

Although there were no multi-national corporations or World Banks in the Buddha's time, he addressed this problem and his teachings have much to say on the subject of social responsibility and individualism today. So I would like to share some thoughts about the Buddhist perspective on the question of social responsibilities in an individualistic era.

The Buddha taught that one of the great paradoxes of life is that the attempt to satisfy one's individual desires--which one takes to be the guides to one's happiness--never brings happiness but rather the opposite. As an individual continues trying to find happiness through the fulfillment of desires, he eventually discovers that one cannot fulfill all of one's desires, because desires multiply exponentially. And in the end this path leads not to happiness but to more suffering. So one of the Buddha's chief teachings in his Four Noble Truths was that desire is the chief cause of human suffering.

The other side of this paradox is that the way to individual happiness lies through focusing not on our individual desires but on our social responsibilities and our interconnection with others. Many of the Buddha's central teachings dealt with this theme.

Historically, it is interesting to note that in the Buddha's time there was a great debate about this very question of the relation of the individual and the social aspects of human existence. The Buddha debated these issues with other ascetic schools of his time. These debates were based not on academic theories and speculation, as debates are today, but they were based on the experiences of the yogis and meditators. They debated their understandings of human existence that arose from their own direct exploration of the mind and the feelings, sensations, etc. The Buddha likewise based His teachings on His Wisdom, His enlightened introspection and observation of the mind and the body.

One group that the Buddhists debated with has been called the "Materialists." This group rejected completely the notion of spirituality and placed all the emphasis on the side of the physical body and material possessions. They held that our true essence is to be found, not in an elusive metaphysical soul or spirit, but in the empirically observable physical body. The Materialists believed that throughout life we inhabit the same body and at death the body perishes and life ends. Since the physical body is annihilated at death, this view was also called "annihilationism." The Materialist's philosophy of living was that one should seek the maximum of individual material pleasure and possessions while one can since there is no afterlife: it was an early day version of the individualist philosophy.

Another group that the Buddha debated with was called the "Substantialists." They held that our individual natures are to be explained by positing a Soul entity that is distinct from the body. A permanent metaphysical self, that travels through this life as the spirit inhabiting this body and at death takes up another body. This view was called "Eternalism" because the Substantialists held that the Spirit continued to exist eternally. The Buddha criticized this view for going to the opposite extreme of emphasizing the spirit over the material side of existence.

The BUDDHA taught a Middle Way between these two extremes of Materialism / Annihilationism and Substantialism/Eternalism to define the nature of the individual and his relation to society, The Buddha set forth what are called the "Three Characteristics of Existence":

- *Anicca* ~ Impermanence,
- *Anatta* ~ No self
- *Dukkha* ~ Suffering.

Anicca, or Impermanence was a key idea. The Buddha held that all things are constantly changing, evolving. This was the Buddha's critique of the materialist position. Our physical bodies are an important aspect of our identity, but they should not be taken to be the objects of desire or the keys to happiness because they are impermanent.

Anatta, or No Self, was another central teaching that applied this idea of impermanence to the spiritual realm of our being. The Buddha said that the essence of an individual does not consist of an unchanging soul, but rather of a changing, evolving spirit or consciousness. The Buddha defined this spirit by explaining the ever-changing states of consciousness that make up our being.

The key point that this Buddhist Dhamma makes is that human existence should be understood as a Process. Both the Body and Mind change very rapidly. You are not the same person you were in the past. This Buddhist view of a person or an individual is surprisingly modern and agrees with the modern sciences such as biology and psychology. For example, biology teaches that our bodies, which we may think of as matter, are actually rapidly changing processes of atoms and molecules. Someone has noted that at any time our bodies consist of 10,000 trillion, trillion atoms. But more than a trillion of these atoms are replaced every one millionth of a second. Atoms are comprised of subatomic particles, some of which have a lifespan of a billionth of a second. These findings represent scientific verification of the Buddha's teaching that individuals are constantly changing processes of nama-rupa, mind-body.

This notion of the process-nature of our being from both the Buddhist and the scientific perspectives has important implications for understanding our connection to society. For example, if we ask "What happens to the atoms and subatomic particles that our bodies turn over every second? " The answer is that they become part of our neighbors' bodies, and vice versa. So there is significant interaction and interdependence. We are directly related to the peo-

ple and the society around us through the process nature of our existence not to mention the social aspects of our existence.

The Buddha spelled out this idea of the interconnectedness of all beings and nature in his teaching called *Paticca Samuppada*, or Dependent Origination. This doctrine teaches that all things and all persons are dependent on the larger web of being for their existence. All life is interconnected and interdependent. No matter how much we wish to assert our independence as individuals, we cannot deny that we did not bring ourselves into being and that at every stage of our lives we are dependent on others and they on us. Thich Nhat Hanh the contemporary Vietnamese Buddhist monk has called this concept Interbeing—by which he means that all things are interdependent, they do not have individual being, they have "Interbeing". "You are present in me, I am present in you. Life constitutes an enormous web of interconnections between people and beings and nature. We cannot simply remove ourselves from this web because this is the context of life. On the Buddhist Middle Path, one is both an individual and a member of a great social process that makes social responsibility a necessary part of our existence. This great social process is expanded even further when one considers the idea of *Samsara.* Over countless past lives we have been connected to all beings in so many ways.

The Buddha emphasized our social responsibility to this web of being through his Ethical Teachings, or *Sila,* that constitute the heart of Buddhist practice. In the Buddha's Dhamma the two chief principles are Wisdom and Compassion. These two principles are closely linked in that the attainment of Wisdom, wherein one sees the interdependent nature of reality, motivates Compassion. However, it is also true that Compassion is an essential component of the path to the realization of Wisdom. Buddhist ethics stress this theme of enlightened compassion in many different ways.

For example, the Four Brahma Viharas, *Metta,* loving kindness, *Karuna*, Compassion, *Mudita*, sympathetic joy, and *Upekkha*, equanimity, represent the essence of the Buddhist path and spell out the nature of human social responsibility. Metta, loving kindness, is prescribed as a key virtue that one should cultivate toward all beings and nature. One should have the concern for others that a parent has for his children because in fact we are all inter-related. This *Metta*

should lead on to Compassion *Karuna* that gives sympathy to others who are suffering just as we are. *Mudita,* or Sympathetic Joy is described as the attitude of rejoicing over the success of others as much as our own. And equanimity *Upekkha* is the overall attitude of even-mindedness with which we should relate to others. Cultivating these virtues gives us a joy of living because of the right relationships we establish with others.

Another example of the way that Buddhist ethics stress interdependence over individualism can be seen in the Panca Sila or Five Precepts that are taken by all Buddhists. All of these Five Precepts, in one way or another have the effect of strengthening one's realization of *Anatta,* or Selflessness. For example, in the first precept one vows to abstain from killing any living being. By taking this vow, a person is required to renounce aggression and to give up the right to assert self will over other beings. Similarly, the second precept, which rules out stealing, has the same effect of forcing a person to recognize that the rights of others in society restrict an individual's right to do whatever he desires. The other precepts similarly teach us that we are all interconnected, and we must practice selflessness in order to have harmony and peace.

Other statements of Buddhist ethics also emphasize this notion of Selflessness. One of the chief perfections or virtues that the Buddha stressed was that of *Dana*, or generosity. Generosity is a supreme practice for purifying the mind and progressing on the path. The chief example of Generosity in Buddhist literature is King Vessantara, who willingly gave all of his possessions to anyone who asked. Because of his selfless generosity, King Vessantara was eventually reborn as Gotama the Buddha.

This ethic of generosity or *Dana* can be said to provide the basic structure for the ideal Buddhist society and reveals the interrelation between social action and individual perfection. The relations between the king, the sangha and the lay people are all supposed to be guided by *Dana.* These relations exemplified the interdependent nature of traditional Buddhist society. For the lay people, Dana provides the means by which they can purify their minds and acquire merit by giving material support to the Sangha. The members of the Sangha, who receive their support from the laity, can purify themselves by giving spiritual sustenance and the

teaching of the Dhamma to the laity in return. Buddhism also held that the King had a special Dhamma or duty, called the *Dasa Raja Dhamma*, or Ten Royal Duties. In this list of Ten Royal Duties, Generosity came first.

- Alms giving ~ *dana*
- Morality ~ *sila*
- Liberality ~ *pariccaga*
- Uprightness ~ *ajjava*
- Gentleness ~ *maddava*
- Piety ~ *tapo*
- Non-anger ~ *akkodha*
- Non-violence ~ *avihinsa*
- Patience ~ *khanti*
- Non-opposition ~ *avirodhan*

In the history of Buddhism, the figure who came to be regarded as the archetype of the Buddhist King was Ashoka, the Indian king/emperor who ruled during the 3rd century BC. Ashoka is seen as the exemplar of what a lay Buddhist and a Buddhist ruler should be. Ashoka built up the Mauryan Empire, a vast empire that covered most of North India. Although he had practiced war, he adopted Dharma and followed a policy of non-violence and generosity toward all. Ashoka's edicts relate how he applied these ethical principles to the governance of his kingdom.

Buddhism teaches that a good, moral society built on the right relationships between the King, the Sangha and the people is a necessary condition for both the survival of the Dharma and the attainment of liberation.

Another teaching that the Buddha gave about this society was the Sangaha Vatthu.

In fact the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement of Sri Lanka is founded on the Principles of four Brahma Viharas of which I have already spoken about and these four Sangaha Vattus, namely, Dana, Beneficence or sharing, *Priya Vacana*, Pleasant language, *Arthacarya,* Constructive Action and *Samanathmatha,* Equality. For nearly forty-five years we have implemented an integrated development programme based on these principles, which now covers over fifteen thousand villages in Sri Lanka. In this

Movement we have demonstrated that enlightened and committed people can release people's participatory self-development processes without being self-centered or individualistic.

We have to remember, however powerful, dominant economic and political structures may be, human beings by nature are essentially social beings. Only up to a point can the humans be desocialized. Intuitively they will revert back to the human spirit. They have an inherent capacity to sustain human conscience and family and community relationships and responsibilities. Unlike in macro organizations and mega networks particularly in the economic and political fields where human thoughts and feelings do not play a substantive role, in the normal human being and his day to day social relationships, conscientious thinking and friendly feelings play a major part. Therefore, if we are to stem the tide of individualism and enhance healthy social relationships we have to begin with a vision or a philosophical basis where human personality awakening and community awakening play a vital role in social development.

One clear example of the value that the Buddha placed on social responsibility can be found in the charge that he gave to the first group of monks that he trained and sent out. In his charge to the monks we see the value he placed on social responsibility. He instructed them, "Go, monks, on your journey, for the good of the many, for the happiness of the many, for the welfare of gods and men."

In the culture in which I was born this kind of philosophy prevailed and our people attempted to build social political and economic institutions without deviating from these teachings. Of course right through history depending on the degree to which the influence of dominant rulers prevailed many deviations from this path occurred bringing great sufferings on our people. At the same time there were people of the caliber of our own Sri Vishvanathan who stood up to these challenges and tried to educate people both by precept and practice that there were more enlightened ways to happiness. Then there were great teachers like Mahatma Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore, Vinoba Bhave, Sri Jayaprakash Narayan, and G. Ramachandran in India who preceded us and kept the ancient path shining. Leo Tolstoy, Grundtvig and Arthur Morgan also belonged to this category of educators. Shri Vishwanathan is fortu-

nate to have learnt from all these world educators and many other great non-violent social revolutionaries.

Today the responsibility has fallen on us. Are we going to accept everything imposed upon us by this individualistic system where human values are eroded and all technological innovations are used to promote competition and if necessary even forces of violence, or are we going to look for alternatives that enable us to sustain a world vision and values that lead to a system where people's needs are satisfied based on co-operation and social harmony leading to world peace. Mitra Niketan founded by Shri Vishwanathan is one courageous effort in this alternative direction.

Lecture delivered by Dr. A.T.Ariyaratne, at the Mitra Niketan, Campus Trivendran, Kerala, India on 29 October 2002

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Interaction Council
High-Level Expert Group Meeting:
"Are We Meeting Our Responsibility to Children?"

A COMMUNITY APPROACH TO CHILD SURVIVAL AND DEVELOPMENT

I welcome the decision of the InterAction Council to hold this meeting specifically on the Theme, 'Our Responsibility to Children.' It is my belief that the current meeting in Tokyo as well as the meeting to be held in Salzburg next July will give a strong message and a concrete action plan to the governments and the citizens' groups in the world to discharge their duties by our children. In this paper I am going to describe very briefly some thoughts based on my experience for the last 45 years and what the **Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement of Sri Lanka** is doing in this regard.

As an individual as well as a member of the Sarvodaya Movement I cannot but recollect with gratitude and admiration the unique services rendered by Dr. James P Grant, the third Executive Director of UNICEF, who put the rights of the children of the world on top of the UN agenda. From mid seventies up to his demise in 1995 I worked very closely with him in a voluntary capacity. I consider him to be the architect of today's programmes for protection, survival and development of children. He not only brought this issue to the attention of governments, UN bodies, foundations, corporations and top religious organizations in the world but also visited numerous people-based organizations around the world and got them to commit and join hands for the protection, survival and development of children I consider him to be the visionary who got the year 1979 declared as the International Year of the Child and mobilized his own dedicated team of UNICEF experts and other UN agencies to make the 1989 Convention On the Rights of

the Child a reality. Not only has the UN unanimously adopted this convention but also in the quickest ever time period governments ratified the convention. So much so today most countries have legislated on the rights of the child taking this document as the source of International Law pertaining to children.

Looking at the present situation, in spite of 192 states ratifying the Convention children's conditions have deteriorated much more than at the time this was ratified. According to the ILO estimates, "around the world some 250 million children between the ages of 5-14 work for a living. 120 million work full time every day all year around. As many as 70% toil in dangerous environments." On 17th June 1999, a global consensus was reached by the ILO to tackle and eliminate the worse forms of child labour. A new International Human Rights Instrument "the worst form of child labour convention - 182' was adopted by the International Labour Organization in Geneva.

Numerous statistics both global and country-wise are published today pertaining to various forms of neglect - harassment, orphaned, abandoned, disabled, etc.- of children where neither the basic needs of children nor the basic rights of children are satisfied. We have to consider how the enthusiasm that was created in 1970s and 1980s withered away and finally was lost altogether. This is true particularly of the governmental, inter-governmental and large philanthropic agencies and corporations. If at all any significant interest is taken and programmes beneficial to children are implemented today these are carried out mainly by non-official organizations. For example the Arigatou Foundation in Japan has taken a global interest on children in promoting what is known as the Global Network of Religions for Children. To me the success of the 70s and 80s were due to the full involvement and commitment of grassroots organizations by governments and intergovernmental organizations like UNICEF and the recognition and support given to them under the very dedicated and able leadership of the then UNICEF Executive Director, Dr. James P Grant.

Today with responsibility I can say that this kind of global leadership is lacking both from UNICEF and other UN organizations. They operate through governments and hardly reach the people. Doing a bureaucratic job is one thing and leading people with a

vision and mission is another thing. When Dr. Grant died in 1995 in his purse was found a note, which read, ***"I am suffering from cancer, but I would not let it conquer me."***

Here is a leadership gap at the global level, which can be filled by the honourable members of the InterAction Council who were Heads of States in their days. They can initiate a programme to identify globally, nationally and at community level, leaders and groups, first those who are already committed to serve children and then others, who can become a dynamic force to implement the children's rights at every level.

At birth the human infant is absolutely helpless. It needs care and affection simply to survive. Care and affection alone are not sufficient. The senses that it is naturally endowed with at birth, need a variety of stimulations if the neural circuitry of its brain is to develop to its full potential. Physical nutrition alone is inadequate for its full development. It needs attention and cognitive stimulation. These can come only from the parents and family members and in their absence from individuals and community organizations, who are educated and are motivated by noble spiritual values which recognize the inter-relatedness of all life.

'In the same way that a mother protects at the risk of her life, her one and only child, protect all living beings with all your loving kindness.' This is the advice of the Buddha. It is in this spirit that we have to take up this challenge to save and protect our children wherever they may be. Such committed leadership is found in all communities and it is by identifying, educating, training and supporting such leadership and their grassroots organizations that we can successfully discharge our responsibilities to the children at risk.

The problem of children is not an isolated one. Their problems are an integral part of a larger problem where all aspects of our society are involved. Therefore, along with the urgency with which children's problems are addressed we should also have a total approach where society as a whole could be transformed and made healthier. This holistic approach should include spiritual, moral, cultural, social, economic and political dimensions of the society in which we live. *It should also be concerned with the development of*

the individual person, the family, the community, the nation and the global community as a whole.

As an illustration of a people's organization taking upon itself the problem of children, I would like to very briefly describe how we in **Sarvodaya** are setting about this work in our country.

In Sri Lanka, at the beginning of the 20th century the children were treasured in our society. They lived in extended families with strong family bonds and their basic needs were met and their basic human rights were protected. They were the main focus in the family and priority was given to their nutrition, psychosocial and educational development. In general the society was neither poor nor affluent at that time. It was more or less a no-poverty no-affluent society. Most people lived in village communities where agriculture, fisheries (in coastal areas), cottage and small industries and essential community services, kept everybody engaged in constructive work. Their basic minimum needs were satisfied. Problem of unemployment was not there and it was what may be called 'a full engagement society.'

During the second half of the century in spite of the advances in education, health, public services, civil administration, family life and the conditions of children started deteriorating. The conditions became worse during the last three decades with the advance of globalization and new economic systems where money incomes were given priority over physical qualities of life; spiritual and moral values being replaced by materialistic considerations; mothers leaving homes, their husbands and children to the Middle East to serve as domestic servants and earn higher wages. Added to this was an unnecessary civil war resulting in thousands of widows, orphans and disabled and homeless refugees, most being children and women.

The Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement which was started in mid-fifties was aimed at reawakening village communities based on the Teachings of the Buddha. Sarvodaya Shramadana means 'awakening of all by sharing labour and other resources.' The Movement transcended all man-made barriers such as caste, race, class, religion and language and appealed to communities to depend on their own self-reliance, local resources and know-how,

and with community participation bring about an all round improvement to their quality of life. In forty five years the Movement succeeded in getting over 15000 village and urban communities comprising almost 50% of the rural people to follow the Sarvodaya path to self-development. During this period almost with foresight Sarvodaya developed one after the other an integrated programme aimed at Human Personality Awakening, Family Awakening, Village and Urban Community

Awakening and National Awakening all of which were satisfactorily functioning at the turn of the century.

With the dawn of the 21st century family life in Sri Lanka, both rural and urban, has changed in an alarming way. The growth of cities and increasing hardships experienced by many of its urban inhabitants forced families to seek out other ways of sustaining themselves. As the bond of family life weakened, in economic desperation, children gravitated to lifestyles centered on the streets, taking residence in doorways or in railway stations. This new class of children known as "street children" did not exist earlier. The economic stresses of urban life necessitated child labour for the survival of households. Various anti-social elements in cities started using these children for prostitution, drug trafficking and other forms of crime. The children became victims of child labour, sexual abuse and even of drugs and alcohol, as their mothers had left them and had gone to other countries to earn. Traditional rural settings where children participated in daily agricultural or domestic activities, which contributed to their educational and social development, too changed.

Trafficking in children is acknowledged as a serious problem in Sri Lanka although the magnitude of the problem is not known. Estimates vary widely as does the exact nature of trafficking, although it is certain that most trafficking is internal, mostly into commercial sex sector. In some areas such as the tea plantations there is a long tradition of the whole family being employed on the estate. Many children were sent away to work elsewhere often in domestic service in the city. These factors were aggravated by failures in education system for poor children. Almost two decades of conflict in the North and East of the island have fostered growth in the commercial sex sector in areas bordering the conflict zone.

Children in these areas have been at risk of abduction into prostitution and or conscription as child soldiers. The numbers are quite large going into more than 250,000 even today after a two year ceasefire period.

The Sarvodaya Movement had from its very inception responded to community problems and needs in an integrated manner. Its programmes have evolved in a manner which enables it to take into consideration all these different aspects, developments and problems that children are facing today. It has a comprehensive and holistic programme that is operational in rural and urban communities, plantations, refugee camps, special homes for displaced children and in public awareness campaigns. This is a model which can be adapted to any situation. Its salient features can be outlined as follows:

1. Select communities for all round development. Educate and train leaders of the community how to design and implement Basic Human Needs and Basic Human Rights programmes with participation of men, women, youth and children of the village. These programmes are done with their own resources. Outside help when it comes will be supplementary to their own efforts. Simplify the essential elements of the UN Charter, Children's Convention and other globally accepted norms of the international law and inculcate the spirit of these laws so that they will be aware of both their rights and responsibilities.

2. Formations of Children's, Youth's, Mother's, Farmer's, and other Elder's, Groups are established and these are related to programmes catering to their specific interests and needs; When they are functioning well they can form a community organization which can be legally recognized and registered by the government enabling them to receive official assistance.

3. When Savings and Credit programmes and village enterprises are started and they develop their own community development banks their general income as well as profits accrued to the society can be used to further improve the nutrition, health, educational and general welfare of the weakest sections of the community.

Sarvodaya Movement over a period of four decades has taken this integrated community self-development programme to more than 15,000 village communities in our country and it has survived many political onslaughts, governmental changes, two bloody insurgencies, and a twenty year civil war. Because of the continuity of our work and consistency of our principles of non-violence and non-sectarianism we are able to work with the governments, the intergovernmental organisations and other philanthropic bodies to conduct the following services:

1. Training of a variety community leaders especially young women in Early Childhood Development Services. They have established over 6,000 ECDS centres where thousands of mothers co-operate to look after their young ones, protect them from the evils mentioned above and even educate the community in general to be responsible for our children.
2. Legal Services Movement. In every district and sub district trained young men and women educate village leaders, teachers and village level government servants to protect children's rights and bring to the notice of the authorities any violations. The newly established Child Protection Authority of the government gives this programme full co-operation.
3. Community Health Movement has a similar training and extension programme pertaining to child and mother care. This includes adolescent Reproductive Health Training, Prevention of STDs and HIV/AIDS, in addition to the general health and nutrition training.
4. Rural Technical Services Movement undertakes self-help rural housing programmes and provision of water and sanitation services.
5. Suwa Setha Services is a vast chain of welfare institutions for the abandoned infants and children, disabled women and children, schools for children impaired of hearing, old and destitute men and women, sexually abused young mothers and so on. Nearly one thousand are residential in Sarvodaya Homes established for them with public donations. In addition to these, community based relief and rehabilitation programmes are conducted. For Example helping those in trauma after the bloody war, and Helping the refugees to resettle.

6. Peace Brigade consisting of youth between 14 and 28, numbering over 90,000, each unit consisting of a leader and 10 members organize peace camps, Interfaith camps, mass peace meditations, conflict resolution workshops, environmental conservation programmes, health clinics and health centres where the beneficiaries are mostly women and children.

7. There is a street children's programme conducted in the city of Colombo.

8. Special classes and meditation programmes for pregnant women and their husbands.

9. Women's Movement is mainly aimed at empowering women through Education, Training and Self-employment.

All the above activities are an integral part of a much larger non-violent social transformation programme to build a more just and fair society for all. The greatest beneficiaries in such a society, of course, will be children and women.

Tokyo - Japan 18th 21st March 2004

SCIENCE AND CIVILIZATION IN SRI LANKA

It is indeed a privilege to be invited by the Institution of Engineers, Sri Lanka, to deliver the Centenary Oration to honour the memory of S.Arumugam, a former President of this institution on the 100th anniversary of his birth. The title given to me for this address is Science and Civilization in Sri Lanka. To talk about this illustrious son of Sri Lanka and on the title of the address itself looked beyond my capacity. Yet I accepted this challenge as Engineer D.L.O. Mendis offered to help me to find the necessary source material for me particularly about Engineer Sanmugam Arumugam.

Our country, Sri Lanka, is going through a very difficult period in every aspect of our national life. It is particularly appropriate at this time of confusion and turmoil to bring to mind the life and mission of this great savant and also to remind ourselves of the ancient wisdom and scientific foundation on which our ancient civilization was built. Today we see in our country application (or misapplication ?) of most modern scientific theories and technologies without any kind of overall understanding of how these applications interact with each other or on society and the environment as a whole. We seem to have degenerated ourselves to be a nation without a vision. It is sad to say that there are many other nations on our planet with the same lack of vision.

Sanmugam Arumugam, after an outstanding early education in Jaffna Hindu College, was recruited by far-seeing colonial educationists to St.Thomas College, Colombo, from where he matriculated. Thereafter he obtained a B.Sc. (Lon) degree with high honours, as an external student. He proceeded to U.K. for further studies and returned to the country in early 1930's with B.Sc. Engineering (Hons) from Kings College, London. Later he acquired MICE (Lond), and MIWE (Lond), professional qualifications. Later he earned his Fellowship FIE (SL) of the Institution of Engineers, Sri Lanka, and was its President in 1967.

Although there were many engineers who appreciated the ancient irrigation works, in a theoretical way, from colonial times, Mr. S. Arumugam was the one engineer who best demonstrated this appreciation in theory and practice. His special interest was the ancient minor irrigation systems, including small tanks that were not considered 'efficient' by other hydraulic engineers in his time. It is also my pleasure to endorse his wisdom from my own personal experience in the rural hinterland of our country today, where I may be forgiven for mentioning that Sarvodaya is working in more than fifteen thousand villages and many of them dependent on small village tank storage, and small anicut diversion irrigation systems.

I am glad that Mr Arumugam's pioneering contributions have been recognized, even belatedly, with the publication of the Arumugam Commemoration Volume[1] in the History of Engineering in Sri Lanka series of the Institution of Engineers.

In his Message to the Commemoration volume, the Director – General of Irrigation at the time of its publication, Mr.D.W.R. Weerakoon[2] wrote:

"The contribution made to national development by the Irrigation department in the field of Water Resources Development, with special emphasis for agricultural use has been very significant. This achievement was made possible through dedicated work of many persons who served in the organization since it was established in 1900. The vision and the inspired thoughts of a few have provided direction and guidance to the rest in their collective effort. Filtering through the annals of the department the name S. Arumugam is unmistakably recognizable among the luminaries who have held the role of trailblazer at different times".

According to a former Director of Irrigation, Mr. K.Shanmugarajah, Arumugam's comprehensive 1957 paper to the Institution of Engineers, Sri Lanka[3], titled *"Scientific Approach to*

[1] Water for People and Nature, Arumugam Commemoration volume. 2003. Vishva Lekha, Ratmalana

[2] Ibid. p. xi

[3] K Shanmugarajah, Water Resources Development of Jaffna Peninsula, with a Foreword by S Arumugam. 1993

Development of Village Irrigation Works" was re-published as a Handbook, and immediately became the most sought after guidance amongst Engineers and Technical Assistants of the Irrigation Department as well as others involved in minor Irrigation work[4]. Arumugam built on the earlier work of J. S. Kennedy, whose 1934 paper was titled[5] *Evolution of Scientific Development of Village Irrigation Works*. In that paper Kennedy had said *"When the knowledge is fully organized the subject becomes amenable to quantitative analysis."* Arumugam's Handbook is still sought after, now as a collector's item after it was updated by Ponnarajah in 1982. It was also built on later in the more precise water balance and run-off studies by Dr S. Somasiri of the Agricultural department, and Mr.G. T. Dharmasena who too served as Director General of Irrigation not so long ago.

Arumugam also compiled *"Guidelines for Maintenance of Irrigation works"* for the benefit of all those entrusted with the responsibility of maintaining irrigation schemes. Also, his *"Manual on Accounting Procedure"* is an indication that his interest was not confined only to scientific and engineering aspects of water resources, but extended to other fields as well, in the proper management of the organization that he served, by enhancing the performance of the Irrigation Engineers and their supporting staff. In doing all this, as principal Deputy Director, he was a tower of strength to the long serving Director of Irrigation, Mr A. E. C. de S. Gunasekera, especially after the devastating floods following unprecedented heavy rainfall in December 1957.

In 1961, he published a seminal study of these floods and their aftermath, as his Presidential Address, in the Engineering, Architecture, and Surveying section of the Sri Lanka Association for the Advancement of Science. This was also republished as a chapter in the Arumugam Commemoration volume[6].

[4] S. Arumugam, "Scientific Approach to Development of Village Irrigation Works". Transactions of the Institution of Engineers, Ceylon, 1957

[5] J S Kennedy. "Evolution of Scientific Development of Village Irrigation Works". Proceedings of the Engineering Association of Ceylon, 1934

[6] Reference 1. Chapter 1, pp. 1 - 13

Mr Arumugam could be given a lot of credit for the flood damage repairs and restoration that was achieved by the Irrigation department within a short period of time, after the 1957 floods, to achieve a bumper Maha harvest in the year following, without the type of foreign aid that has become almost a bad habit with us in this country, well before the recent tsunami disaster. After the tsunami of December 26, 2004, we have witnessed a sequence of faltering attempts to restore some measure of normalcy to those afflicted persons numbering in tens of thousands all over the coastal areas of this island, of all races and religions, quite in contrast with the self reliant attitude to solving the problems facing the country after those 1957 floods.

With regard to relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction work after tsunami I would commend only the Department of Railways who stood up to the occasion and brought back normalcy within three months. Even seven months after the tsunami, bureaucrats and technocrats seem to be still groping in the dark and feeling their way how to tackle this national disaster. Foreign aid has blinded them and what was intended to be a compassionate blessing (dana) has turned into the biggest curse for this country today. A good many of them may even have become corrupt. This privileged class of people, I can say from personal experience, was busy in their offices framing new rules and regulations to control people who were making a sacrifice to serve the people who were affected by tsunami and were suffering. To them every volunteer and every organization besides the government agencies were assumed as dishonest and had to be checked. What a contrast to people like Engineer Arumugam who valued people's participation in a crisis like this. If people were taken into confidence and were involved in the work what a difference it would have made.

As a devout Hindu, Mr Arumugam's interest in ancient small tanks was related to his religious devotion. By providing a tank for Thiruketheeswaram Temple, he enabled the "Palavi Theertham" to be held at Thiruketheeswaram in 1949 after a lapse of three hundred years. After the tidal wave in the 1960s I also had the privilege of repairing this tank with about 300 volunteers from the South.

After thirty-two years in the Irrigation Department, during which he worked in all parts of the country including the malarial dry zone, Mr.Arumugam retired as Deputy Director in 1967, and was immediately invited by the Chairman of the Water Resources Board to function as his Engineer / Managing Director. The Chairman was none other than Mr Hema Basnayake, who retired as Chief Justice of Sri Lanka, and chose to head the Water Resources Board, on account of his great faith in the ancient small tanks, which he had known was given step-motherly treatment by Irrigation engineers, of course with the outstanding exception of Mr Arumugam.

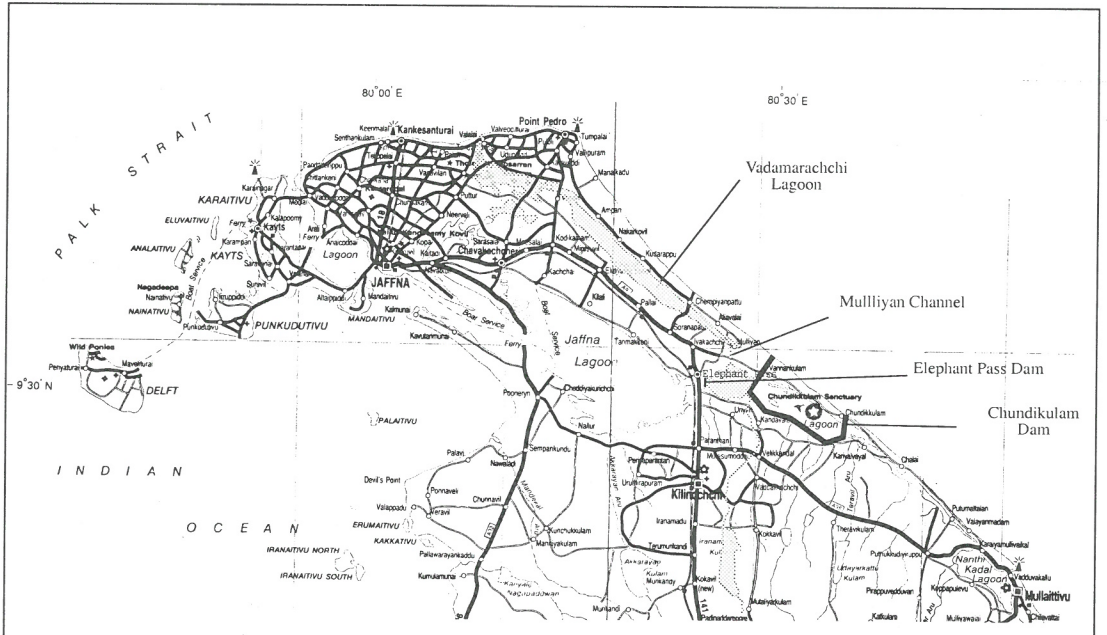
Mr Arumugam responded by compiling the comprehensive[7] *Water Resources of Ceylon,* published in 1969, which is a standard reference book. He went to live in London in 1983, and spent the last years of his life, still a scholar, publishing many books on religious and personal topics, until he passed away at the age of 95 years, in March 2000.

When he was a Director in the Water Resources Board, Mr Arumugam also compiled *Studies on Ground Water in Sri Lanka, (Ceylon)* and named it the *C. H. L. Sirimanne Memorial volume,* leaving it to be published later. This was done recently by the Water Resources Board. In this context, Dr C. R. Panabokke, Director of the Water Resources Board in a Message in the Arumugam Commemoration volume wrote:

"Arumugam's paper on Development of Ground Water and its Exploitation in the Jaffna Peninsula *is scientifically discerning and very elegant. In all his writings on ground water conditions in Sri Lanka, Arumugam never failed to acknowledge and credit the pioneer scientific studies conducted in this field by the late C. H. L. Sirimanne whom he described as the Father of Ground Water Science in this country. This was the nature of the man".*

Mr Arumugam's interest in the scientific approach to better utilization of ground water resources was a key to solving the problem of water supply for domestic consumption, and for

[7] S Arumugam. Water Resources of Ceylon. Water Resources Board. 1969



MAP OF JAFFNA REGION

(Adopted from Arumugam Commemoration Volume)

agriculture, in the Jaffna peninsula. The Urellu Well Windmill Pumping Scheme was one result[8].

Another was his proposal called[9] *A River for Jaffna - the Arumugam plan,* (the name given by others), is described below by Shanmugarajah, and is a practical scheme that was conceived back in 1954, which needs to be restored today. In fact it is a very important project and an urgent requirement for the people in the peninsula.

The Kanagarayan Aru and three other streams drain into the Elephant Pass Lagoon and hydrologists found that an average of 91,000 acre feet of water flow as waste annually to the sea via the eastern end of the Lagoon at Chundikulam, which would be a boon to the people in the Peninsula who depend on ground water from wells.

Furthermore, intensive study carried out by the Irrigation Department in about 50 square miles in the North-Western part of the peninsula had revealed that 30% of the wells are becoming brackish. This was due to over-drawing of water from wells for cultivation of crops, resulting in saline intrusion from below. Diverting the Kanagarayan aru water into the internal lagoons of the peninsula is the leading component of the River for Jaffna project.

It is said that more than two decades ago, Mr Esmond Wickramasinghe, father of the present Leader of the Opposition and former Prime Minister Hon. Ranil Wickramasinghe, conveyed the intention of the President, His Excellency J R Jayewardene to give water to Jaffna Peninsula from the mainland by completing A River for Jaffna, started in 1954. The late Professor H. W. Thambiah Q.C., LL.D., former Supreme Court Judge of Sri Lanka, and of the Republic of Sierra Leone, the late Mr S Arumugam, and Mr S. Sanmugarajah, Deputy Director of Irrigation had been invited to meet President, J R Jayewardene, Prime Minister Hon. R Premadasa, and other Ministers, and officials, on the 4th of May 1983 to explain the project. Others present at the meeting had included the Director of Irrigation, the Government Agent Jaffna,

[8] See Reference 1

[9] See Reference 3

the Chairman District Council Jaffna, and Treasury Officials. The project was presented in detail and questions by the Ministers and others were answered by Mr Arumugam, after which the President decided to implement the project, and instructed Treasury officials to release the necessary funds from the President's Fund. Sadly, the ethnic conflict that developed few months later forced it to be shelved. Perhaps the auspicious time has come again after two decades to implement the project.

In the method Arumugam followed in his work[10]*, he made very intensive use and interpretation of the 1 inch to 1 - mile topographical survey sheets of the Survey Department, some of the best maps in South Asia, based on land surveys. This was also recognized by Kennedy who said "It would be difficult to exaggerate the importance to the engineer of the contoured topographical maps produced by the Survey Department". These one mile sheets as they are called are now replaced by the 1: 50, 000 metric sheets, prepared from aerial surveys, which do not show the degree of detail shown on the old one mile sheets, particularly in regard to ancient sites and monuments.*

Mr Arumugam is recognized as a scientist with a broad humanitarian vision like just a few other technical and scholarly men of an earlier age, outstanding among them the great Ananda K Coomaraswamy and R L Brohier. These three savants were appropriately recognized in a Dedication to a new project launched in October 2003 titled[11] *Science and Civilization in Sri Lanka.* This project will bring together scholars of many disciplines, to emulate even in a modest manner the incomparable work of that great polymath, Joseph Needham who laboured for more than half a century to prepare his amazing work *Science and Civilization in China.*

Dr Joseph Needham may be remembered by some of the older generation, as the Chairman of the Education Commission in Ceylon, in the late 1950's, at a time when he was teaching Biochemistry in the University of Cambridge, having already been

[10] See Reference 3

[11] Science and Civilisation in Sri Lanka – An Idea whose Time has come . Vishva Lekha, Ratmalana. October 2003

elected a Fellow of the Royal Society, FRS, for this work in 1941. His life's great work had already started with publication of the first volume of[12] *Science and Civilization in China* in 1954, and he was elected a Fellow of the British Academy, FBA, at that time. He thus represented what CP Snow later described as the "Two Cultures" in his book by that name. Needham had been posted to the British embassy in Beijing (then Peking) back in 1942, and had become fascinated with the civilization of that ancient land. He also took a great interest in the cultural heritage of Sri Lanka, and its peoples, and knew about the work of Professor S. Paranavitana, and others, in researching our history and pre-history. His special interest was the ancient irrigation systems, and he knew about Arumugam's and R L Brohier's work and publications.

No one would expect Science and Civilization in Sri Lanka to fully emulate *Science and Civilisation in China.* I am sure that there is no such intention, given the vast differences between these two ancient cultures, but the objective is justified in the context of the present times; when there is a great need to fall back on our own resource base especially for recovery after the tsunami. This terrible natural disaster brought out some unexpected evidence of what is usually described as legend, for example the story of Kelanitissa and Vihara Maha Devi. This should be an inspiration to those interested in the Science and Civilization in Sri Lanka project.

In this context it is worth mentioning that in British colonial times there were many administrators who published books, many of them like Leonard Woolf, members of the elite Ceylon Civil Service, other members of the judiciary. Outstanding among these was of course Ananda K Coomaraswamy whose *Medieval Sinhalese Art* published in 1908 is the greatest testament to science and civilization in Sri Lanka. Another was A. C. Lawrie, District Judge in the Central province from 1873 to 1892, and later a Senior Puisne Judge of the Supreme Court. He found time to collect material and publish a remarkable Gazetteer of the Central Province in two volumes in 1898, which contains rare details of which the following is an example.[13]

[12] Obituary for Joseph Needham p. lxxx. in Innovation and Self Reliance, Kulasinghe Felicitation volume, 2000. Vishva Lekha, Ratmalana

[13] A C Lawrie. Gazeteer of the Central Province. 1898. p. 793

"Sirimalwatte, Kandy: Tradition says that this was a royal flower garden made by King Dutugemunu (164 B.C.); that there was a street between the city of Anuradhapura and the flower garden, so thickly peopled that a basket of flowers picked in the morning passed from hand to hand and reached the city in time for the evening offering."

We should remember that Kandy is some 1500 ft. above mean sea level, and Anuradhapura is about 500 ft.msl. The distance between as the crow flies maybe about 100 miles.

This cameo description of a small feature of our ancient social and cultural organization is in striking contrast to what we see around us in this day and age where so called development often means no more than imitating the physical features of western countries. High rise buildings with all their attendant problems may be a necessary evil in the urban context, but super highways are less justifiable when rural roads remain in a state of disrepair, and rural bridges are make-shift improvised edandas, or simply non-existent.

And the railway built in colonial times has been run down over the years due to lack of proper maintenance. That this is not the fault of local engineers and technical staff was dramatically seen after the tsunami. The coast line railway south of Colombo that was almost completely destroyed was restored in an unbelievable 6 weeks entirely by local endeavor, because administrative hurdles were lifted. For example some Austrians I casually met were of high praise for our railway engineers. They told me that these engineers were of the highest international standards. Between Panadura and Wadduwa in a place called Pinwatte they were amazed at the quality of the work and the speed with which the railway bridge was constructed with material donated by Austria. This an excellent example of international cooperation.

With this rather long introduction, I come to the main thrust of my talk today which is Science and Civilization in Sri Lanka. Please do not expect me to elaborate on this subject as I am not professionally competent to do so. All I am trying to do as a layman is to encourage you and others who are scientifically trained, to pursue and complete the study on *Science and Civilization in Sri Lanka* started in 2003 for the benefit of future generations. In fact

I was present at the first meeting, and, after all the presentations were made I got up and made a request from all those scholars to complete the mission they started so well that day. I told them we as laymen have a right to know what they have discovered from their research about our past. What I am going to say in my lecture today may be helpful in exploring areas that were not thought to be scientifically important for such an investigation.

Perhaps, in the beginning, it is best to start with a definition or two. The word "engineer" has the same root as words like "genius" and "ingenuity" .Originally, an engineer was seen as a person who brought out the genius, the power in a device. I believe that this description is quite appropriate for Engineer Sanmugam Arumugam, whom we honor here today.

The other word we should explore is "civilization". According to the Oxford English Dictionary, a "civilization" is:

1. an advanced stage or system of human social development.
2. the process of achieving this.
3. a civilized nation or region.

Civilization is the "glue" that holds together a people. It is what makes a nation out of barbarians. It is our common vision that allows us to rise above our petty wants, cowardly fears and egotistical desires.

Calling our present society a "civilization" does not make it so. We have created a society that is extremely advanced - for some, in some ways, but we need only look at the beggars who line our streets or the greedy who line our corridors of power to see that we are a far cry away from an advanced stage of human social development.

When we talk of Science and Civilization in Sri Lanka do we confine ourselves to a particular period during the 2550 year period of recorded history or go beyond it to prehistoric times? On the other hand should we limit our study first to a particular period in our history like the Anuradhapura period so that we can draw a picture of the best level of civilization we reached during that period? Perhaps in a highly confused state of society today even

such a limited study might give us some guide lines as to how we should plan for a stable, sustainable and peaceful future.

In my work in the Sarvodaya Movement for nearly fifty years I have got my inspiration from Anuradhapura period. If what we mean by a civilization is an advanced state of social, economic, political, scientific, artistic and religious development, then Anuradhapura period is the ideal we can think of. In spite of South Indian invasions Anuradhapura Kingdom lasted over 1200 years and its influence on us continues to this day.

I must emphasize at the outset, that as I see it our ancient civilization was essentially based on Buddhism. But, there also had been an advanced civilization before the advent of Buddhism. Recent archaeological excavations in the Anuradhapura Citadel by Prof. Siran Deraniyagala have confirmed this. The ancient legends of Ravana have to be understood in modern terms, as Dr. P. R. Anthonis pointed out at the launch of the Science and Civilization in Sri Lanka Project in October 2003. Was Rawana's flying machine powered by solar energy? Was that civilization based on worshiping the 'Sun God'?

Then there are the Jataka stories, which have to be interpreted and explained. For example, in the Ummagga Jatakaya, there is a reference to switching on a light which suggests something like electricity. Sir Arthur C. Clarke has pointed to the Sigiriya frescoes that showed something like a telescope, handled by a maiden, and something like a radio held to the ear of a maiden[14]. These are material indications of some achievements, to match the technical wonders of the ancient irrigation works and the Buddhist monuments, but what we need to study is the philosophy underlying the ancient civilization. When we look at the future we must focus on small communities held together, and linked together at district, provincial, and national levels. If we do this, I think we will soon be on the way to recovering from the devastation caused by the war as well as by tsunami. But, if we rely on foreign powers and foreign aid alone, we will be ruined.

The basis of our civilization is our collective consciousness, the shared thoughts of all of the people, those thoughts being in

[14] Science and Civilisation in Sri Lanka – An Idea whose Time has come . Vishva Lekha, Ratmalana. October 2003.

harmony with all other sentient beings. That is the philosophy that allows a civilization, ancient or modern, to flourish. Our problems today stem from the fact that we do not have a collective consciousness about ourselves or our island. It is a person, thinking individual thoughts of greed, desire and violence that keeps us from being truly civilized. Greed, personal desire and/or violence cannot ever create a lasting civilization.

A broken and fragmented society generates a broken and fragmented science. It produces a situation where otherwise intelligent scientists suggest projects that are ruthless in their application, or just plain crazy. Just because a scientist is smart enough to splice human genes onto a tomato plant, merely to make the plant look "redder", does not mean that scientist has the wisdom to see that it would be foolish and dangerous to do so.

We cannot have this type of scientist determine for us what kind of civilization we will live in. Just because an engineer can design a building that stands over a quarter of a mile high does not mean that building should be built. Just because other scientists can create 500 channels of television does not mean they should be watched. Our civilization must come from our collective vision of the future. Our scientists must be led by that collective vision, not the other way around. Science that is separate from our humanity can serve neither the people nor the planet.

When Greece was at the height of their civilization Sri Lanka too had reached its most advanced period. There are numerous references to the participation of thousands of arahants (enlightened monks) in all important national occasions. When the Maha Stupa, Ruwanweliseya was built, from the very inception of laying the foundation stones to the completion of the work monks played a crucial role. Construction work along with planning and technology was a very materialistic exercise. What is the role that fully enlightened monks, arahants, had to play in this worldly exercise? Or was there a direct link between material prosperity and spiritual advancement?

King Dutugemunu had decreed that any body – layman or monk - working at the Ruanweliseya construction site should be compensated in cash or kind. No body should be allowed to work

free or do sharamadana – samudan – as it was called during that period. People liked to work free so that they could acquire merit for the next world. As this was not allowed those who worked went to one of the stores situated on the four sides and took cash or goods they required. It can be believed that they always took away less than what they could have earned because they wanted to leave behind the merit, where the surplus merit became a national investment in the form of Irrigation works, big medium and small tanks, stupas, hospitsls, libraries and other public works. Our social scientists should be able to work out a Theory of Surplus Merit. Their world view founded on the teachings of the Buddha transcended both time and space.

Just think of the deep meaning of their daily invocation:

Devo vassatu kalena	- May there be seasonal rains
Sassa sampatti hotuca	- May there be agricultural prosperity
Pito bhavatu lokoca	- May the living world be happy
Raja bhavatu dhammiko	- May the rulers be righteous

Rain (Water), Food (Agriculture), Happiness (Spiritual Development) and Righteous Governance (Grama Swaraj or Village Self governance) were the four aspects that were emphasized to live a peaceful life. Science and technology were developed and used in harmony with nature for a hydraulic civilization, self-sufficiency in food, network of temples dagobas, shrines, bodhi-trees etc for religious worship and meditation for spiritual awakening, and self-governing village communities whose basic human needs and basic human rights were guaranteed. Wewa (tank), Kumbura (paddy field), and Dagoba (temple) were the symbols of our civilization.

In regard to the social organization in ancient time the colonial lawyer, F.A.Hayley said [15] *"While the lord of the village or the chief or headman, to whose control it was assigned was pimarily responsible for good order, there existed side by side with community of property, a community of responsibility, and a recognition of self-government by the village council in the regulation of local affairs".*

In this context I wish to quote the last three paragraphs of the Postscript from Ervin Laszlo's book MACROSHIFT – Navigating the Transformation to a Sustainable World (Berret-Koehler Publishers, Inc. San Francisco):

"The paradigm emerging in the sciences of consciousness is consistent with that which comes to the fore in the new physics and new biology. It testifies that there is constant connection and communication among all the things that co-exist and coevolve in the cosmos and in the biosphere – and that human consciousness is a part of the evolving web of connection and communication that envelops the planet.

The holistic paradigm in the sciences tells us that we are not machines, however complex and sophisticated. We are truly not separate from each other and from our planetary environment. We are participants in nature, interacting with each other, with the wide reaches of the biosphere, and with the still wider reaches of the universe.

The holistic insight of cutting edge science supports and lends legitimacy to the Holos-consciousness emerging in society. Science can contribute to healing the split that separates one person from another, one people from other peoples, and all of humankind from Earth and the cosmos.

This concluding remark of Ervin Laszlo, Founder and President of the Club of Budapest, has great relevance to understand the philosophical principles which were generally known and practiced by the rulers as well as the ruled in the Anuradhapura Period of Sri Lanka. That was a period when the highest goal of people was attaining full enlightenment or realization of Nibbanic bliss. With this supreme spiritual goal in mind all their social, political and economic activities were organized in what we call today for sustainable development. Wasn't the Anuradhapura period a model of a society where Holos-Consciousness was developed. Scientists should do research as to the linkages and networks that prevailed bringing into one total organism human

[15]F A Hayley. The Laws and Customs of the Sinhalese. Kandyan Law, 1923. Reprinted 1993. Navrang New Delhi.

personalities, families, communities, the people of the world, the animal and the plant kingdom, and universes near and far - (anthalikke).

To protect and sustain our life support systems and prevent them from being subjected to man made or natural catastrophes the Buddha advised us not to violate the Five Cosmic Laws:

1. Cosmic Law pertaining to Genetic Order (Bija Niyama)
2. Cosmic Law pertaining to Climatic Cycles (Utu Niyama)
3. Cosmic Law pertaining to Cause and Effect (Kamma Niyama)
4. Cosmic Law pertaining to All Phenomena (Dhamma Niyama)
5. Cosmic Law pertaining to Consciousness (Citta Niyama)

I am not going to describe and give examples as to how the present chaotic state of our world has come about by the violation of these Cosmic Laws. It is the task of the scientists to find out to what extent present global disasters such as HIV/Aids, Ethnic Wars, Earthquakes, Environmental degradation and decadence, Poverty, floods, droughts, landslides, desertification, tidal waves, Tsunami, etc are related to these violations. These are scientific laws that should be studied by scientists in the *Science and Civilization in Sri Lanka project.*

Modern science is increasingly breaking the barriers that seemed to exist between living as well as nonliving things. Everything is related to everything else. Wasn't this the principle that the Buddha laid down as the Paticcasamuppada Dhamma – The Principle of Dependent Origination? Wasn't this philosophy applied to every department of life during that period? It is not justifiable to neglect this philosophy saying that it is applicable only to the spiritual sphere. Holos-consciousness that scientists are talking about now was very much a reality during the Anuradhapura period.

This philosophy was practiced when we built an irrigation tank, and laid out the channel systems, or when a chetiya was built on a high elevation, where the surrounding landscape can be seen. Because what is most important, more than the object itself, is the relationship with other objects. For example, when a big reservoir is built, it must be related to small tanks, and that way there is no wastage of water, no salinity and other adverse environmental

impacts. While our civilization undoubtedly was a hydraulic civilization we should not fail to see it being supplemented by highly scientific, architectural and other inventions. Have we thought of trying to find out the natural energy concentrations on places where huge stupas or other important structures were built?

Judge C.G.Weeramantry's separate Opinion as Vice President of the International Court of Justice submitted on 25th September 1997 in the case concerning The Gabcicovo-NAGYMAROS PROJECT, now published as a separate booklet under the title Environmental Aspects of Sri Lanka's Ancient Irrigation System gives a detailed description of our ancient scientific ways of sustainable development.

In this now much cited judgment Judge Weeramanthry said "The notion of not causing harm to others and hence sic utere ut alienum no laedas (use your own property in such a way as not to hurt others) was a central notion of Buddhism. It translated well into environmental attitudes. 'Alienum' (others) in this context could be extended to future generations as well, and other component elements of the natural border beyond man himself, for the Buddhist concept of duty had an enormously long reach."

Another learned judgement dealing with enrvironmental destruction was given in the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka,in the Eppawala Fundamental Rights Case. Justice A.R.B. Amerasinghe said:

"Indeed a hypothesis has been advanced that the Eppawala phosphate deposit was not 'discovered in 1931, but was known to our rulers and people for thousands of years who shared the thought that the deposit should be utilized. The difference between them and us is how this should be done. The ingenuity of the rulers and people of Sri Lanka in times gone by it is suggested, had created a stable and sustainable agricultural development system harnessing the key natural resources available within the natural habitat including the Eppawala deposit. The natural process of weathering, microbial activity and precipitation might have released plant nutrients which were carried overland by flowing into the reservoir, channels and rivers as well as permeating to the soil matrix and possibly reaching underground aquifers."

What is implied in this thought provoking judicial statement is this. The irrigation system in western Rajarata, with the wonderful Kalaweva –Jayaganga dominating ,was laid out by the ancient people with an awareness of the beneficial slow-leaching effects of the Eppawala phosphate deposit on agricultural crop production in Rajarata! There is information about all this in ancient manuscripts. Still very little research has been done. The earlier civilization was built on a rich scientific heritage and this has to be studied by teams of scientists. In the brochure published for launching the *Science and Civilization in Sri Lanka* project, Dr Ananda Guruge refers to the Tara statue in the British museum, and other wonders that should inspire us in this work.

In my opinion books written in the Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa periods, rock inscriptions, Sigiri Gee etc should be studied not purely from the literary angle but from a scientific perspective to probe into the past. I am aware that this is intended to be done in the Science and Civilization in Sri Lanka series, with the first volume concentrating on the ancient water and soil conservation ecosystems in which irrigation for crop production was the primary, but not the only function. Flood Control, Drainage, and soil conservation and enrichment by the vegetative cover, both perennial and seasonal, were important supplementary functions in these systems .One scholar who understood the function of the small tanks in this complex arrangement of hydraulic engineering was of course was Engineer Arumugam. Another is Architect Udula Bandara Aswadahami in his, weva describes these systems from an ecosystems perspective.

The Kalawewa – Jayaganga water and soil conservation ecosystem in western Rajarata is a cultural landscape in archaeological terms. So is the Elahera-Minneriya-Gantalawa (Kantalai) system in Eastern Rajarata.This began with construction of Elahera stone dam across Ambanganga by King Vasabha (65-109) in the first century, and was brought to a climax by King Parakramabahu (1153-86) in the twelfth century. These two amazing examples of stable and sustainable development in ancient Rajarata, begun in the Anuradhapura period, that are still functional after fifteen and twenty centuries respectively, are perhaps unparalleled in any part of the world!

In conclusion I think it is appropriate to dedicate this Commemoration Centenary Oration on Sanmugam Arumugam, to the Science and Civilization in Sri Lanka project, with the following concluding quotation from Professor Will Durant's *The Story of Civilization,* Volume II:

Decay of religious belief promoted the growth of compensatory utopias: Zeno the Stoic described an ideal communism in his Republic (ca. 300) and his follower Iambus (ca. 250), inspired Greek rebels with a romance in which he described a Blessed Isle in the Indian Ocean (perhaps Ceylon); there, he reported all men were equal, not only in rights but in ability and intelligence; all worked equally, and shared equally in the product; all took equal part, turn by turn, in administering the government; neither wealth nor poverty existed there, nor any war of the classes; nature provided fruit abundantly of her own accord, and men lived in harmony and universal love.

Whether true or not Professor Durant's statement about Sri Lanka of centuries ago, it is clear that, with hard work and diligence, his statement may become true for our future. We can create a civilization where all are equal, where neither poverty nor affluence has taken hold, and where all humanity lives in harmony and universal love. That is a civilization worth achieving and worth protecting. That civilization can be a model for all other nations.

I thank you for your patient attention!

Dr. A. T. Ariyaratne is the Founder and President of the Sarvodaya Movement of Sri Lanka.

Biographical data of Sanmugam Arumugam

Date of birth: 31st August 1905 in Jaffna, Sri Lanka

Schools attended: St. Johns College, Jaffna and St. Thomas College, Mt. Lavinia

Academic Qualifications: B. Sc. (Extenal), University College,

London, 1928, B. Sc (Eng)., University of London, 1930

Professional Qualifications: Fellow, Institution of Engineers, Sri Lanka, Fellow, Institution of Civil Engineers, London, Fellow, Institution of Water Engineers, London

Employment: 1933 to 1965 - Ceylon Government (Department of Irrigation) last position held for nearly ten years was that of Deputy Director

1966 to 1977 Chief Engineer and Member, Board of Directors, Water Resources Board

1974 to 1977 Member, Board of Directors, Water Supply & Drainage Board

Positions held: President, Institution of Engineers, Ceylon, 1966/67. His Presidential Address at the 61st Annual Conference, 1967, was titled "Development of Water Resources, Conservation and Utilisation in Ceylon"

President, Engineering Section C of the Ceylon Association for the advancement of Science, 1960. His Presidential Address was on the extent of damage by the 1957 floods

Publications: Published books include "Development of Village Irrigation Works" (1957), and "Water Resources of Ceylon" (1969). In addition, after retirement he published several books on ancient Hindu temples and a Dictonary of Biograhies,

He read numerous papers on various topics before the Institution of Engineers and the Ceylon Association for the Advancement of Science, CAAS, now SLAAS.

He recognised the true significance and value of the ancient village small tank systems, which ran counter to the conventional wisdom of the day which was for the construction of large reservoirs that submerged the ancient small village tanks, such as under the Gal Oya Project, Walawe Project and the Mahaweli Diversion Scheme. The wheel has turned full circle now and the Government is actively promoting the restoration of village tanks.

He was decades ahead of his time in promoting the use of renewable energy. A pilot project was constructed at Urellu in 1952 using wind driven pumps for irrigation. This was followed by a paper read before the CAAS in 1955 titled "Wind as a source of power for Agricultural Development in Ceylon".

Another visionary project was: The "River for Jaffna" project. Work was started on this in the 1950's but it was never completed.

Professor Ramlal Parikh Commemoration Lecture
Ahamedabad. INDIA. 2005 November 21st

EDUCATION WITHOUT BORDERS TO PROMOTE WISDOM

When Manda Parikh, the beloved daughter of Prof. Ramlal Parikh, invited me to deliver this lecture I was getting ready to leave for the airport that evening on an extended two months Sarvodaya promotional tour to Europe and the United States of America. After I return I also had accepted two engagements one in New Delhi end of this month and the other in Puerto Rico – USA again – at the beginning of December. My first thought was not to accept this assignment, as it appeared to be physically impossible for me to fulfill this. Then my mind went back to the times when Prof. Ramlal Parikh guided, encouraged and promoted my work not only in Sri Lanka and India but in many other Asian countries of the world as well, where we worked together for many years. I thought "He is no longer with us and it is our duty to make our small contribution to fulfill his mission for which he lived and served so selflessly." So I promised Manda that I would try my best to make it. Manda followed this up every week wherever I was; so here I am.

I don't have to tell you that Education was the subject that he was passionately interested in. There was no aspect of education he was not concerned with, as he strongly believed in Gandhiji's concept of "Education for life, through life and throughout life." When UNESCO declared the goal of Literacy for All by the end of last century he struggled very hard to innovate programmes of education for child and adult literacy and headed many national and international organizations that were dedicated to serve these sectors. He could not conceive of education without promoting peace and demonstrated his creativity during the time he headed the Peace Research Institute. During this period he visited our Sarvodaya Headquarters in Sri Lanka and gave a lot of advice to me and my colleagues.

I am grateful to Ramlalji for so much he has done for me personally and it is nothing but right I should mention at least two of his kind acts. It was at his invitation that I delivered the Kamalnayan Bajaj Lecture Series in Gujerat Vidyapit. When I asked him to suggest a topic he proposed that I should talk on "Western and Asian Science – Two Ways of Seeking Knowledge Through Causes." I think he was quite happy with what I expressed in those three lectures. One day in Malaysia we had an international conference which was attended by both of us. He presided over the opening session and he started by saying "I have to break some good news. I have the pleasure of announcing that this year's Kamalnayan Bajaj Award for spreading Gandhian values outside India will be awarded to A.T. Ariyaratne who is with us today." After a lengthy congratulatory address he handed over to me the letter inviting me to Bombay to come and receive it at a ceremony, which was presided over by the former President of India.

If Ramlalji was alive he would have suggested a topic for this lecture which had something to do with Wisdom because on the previous occasion he invited me to speak here he wanted me to speak on Knowledge. So I thought I will say something on this occasion on the topic "EDUCATION WITHOUT BORDERS TO PROMOTE WISDOM " Our world seems to be saturated with knowledge on all subjects. Most of the subjects, which we studied when we were young, have now been divided and subdivided into so many specialized areas it looks as if those specialists have lost sense of the general nature of the subjects themselves. Society as a whole seems to be losing what we knew as common sense. The ultimate result of this trend of development in knowledge is likely to be the disappearance of wisdom from matters of day to day decision making not only by the common people like you and me but more so by the leaders of societies and nations. This is a very detrimental development for individuals, families, communities, societies and nations. Educators have to draw their attention to this situation and discover remedial measures. I am only placing this global challenge before you in the spirit of that Educator par Excellence Prof. Ramlal Parikh.

People are increasingly becoming knowledgeable almost in every subject. It is no longer necessary to go to school or to be literate

in the traditional sense to acquire information which adds up to the knowledge which one already has. Electronic media are conveying to the viewers' eyes and ears what their owners and controllers think people should see and hear and know. They penetrate so much into the people's consciousness that the latter can hardly discriminate between what is true or untrue or what is useful to them or not. There is no wisdom operating. Wielders of political power and wealth of the world seem to have taken for granted this situation, for it does not appear to disturb them as long as they hold on to their power and wealth. In general most people seem to be happy with the knowledge of what they have and enjoy, and also of what they can continue to acquire in the future. Wisdom seems to be an unknown, unnecessary and an unexplored realm for most people.

When the information that is brought in through the senses to the consciousness and which is retained there as knowledge, which later gets converted into thoughts, words or deeds as needs arise, the human being is not different from a computer or a robot without a controller. It is wisdom that elevates a human being to a higher level of consciousness to selectively absorb and use the information and knowledge to the good of one's self and others. In the absence of wisdom a person with whatever knowledge he or she has uses it to promote selfishness and egocentricity. What is wrong with the present system of Education is that it does not pay sufficient attention to elevate knowledge into wisdom.

In the modern world if we carefully look into the struggles most human beings make to achieve worldly success in wealth, power or fame it is not difficult to understand the extent to which they are selfish and self-centered. They succeed in achieving their goals at immense cost to others, their environment and above all to their own spiritual lives. When this greed on the part of individuals or even groups such as business firms and corporations, political parties and power seekers, lead them to want more and more for themselves, they enter into the world of unhealthy competition where unethical, illegal and even criminal behaviors become common place. When greed is associated with ill-will and hatred in major economic and political leaders and organizations such a society gets enveloped in the darkness of spiritual ignorance. This is how peaceful and contented societies become corrupt, violent and unsafe for the law-abiding

citizens. These societies degenerate beyond redemption destroying at the end the very individuals or groups themselves who pioneered this transformation from good to evil. Perpetuation of this state of affairs in our societies and the world has to be halted.

The Buddha has advised us not to violate certain cosmic laws pertaining to our Genetic system (*Bija Niyama*), Climatic system (*Utu Niyama*), Karmic law (*Kamma Niyama*), Mind (*Chitta Niyama*), and Phenomena (*Dhamma Niyama*) if the human society is to survive on this planet. We have violated these cosmic laws so much that all countries in the world are affected by contagious diseases such as HIV-AIDS, social problems such as drug addiction, underworld gangs, civil wars and natural disasters, such as droughts, floods, tidal waves, hurricanes, earthquakes, and tsunamis. The origin of all these violations is in the Mind. "The Mind is the foremost Dhamma, Mind is the Forerunner, and Mind is Supreme. Whatever is said or done with an evil mind will result in suffering." What ever suffering – manmade or natural – that is taking place in our societies any where in the world has originated in our minds. Mere accumulation of knowledge is not the solution to this global problem. That is why I am proposing an educational approach – Education without Borders to Promote Wisdom. I go on my conviction that Wisdom and not Knowledge is the answer to the problems we are facing today.

How can we define wisdom? We can simplify and say that when knowledge is correctly used for the good of oneself and others it is wisdom. There again we have to know the nature of the knowledge we are going to use and what the correct purpose for which we are using it.. Assume that we are well informed and knowledgeable as to how to use a lethal weapon and also we are aware of the persons, say a hostile group, on whom this weapon has to be used. If we do that is this a wise use of the knowledge? Certainly not. If we are to properly understand knowledge and wisdom we have to look at the totality of our life and living in this world and the universe. Then only we can put both these notions in the proper context.

A holistic look at our existence is given by the Buddha's Teachings known as the Paticca Samuppada Dhamma – Teaching on Dependent Origination. Buddhist scholars say that this is the most

profound teaching of the Buddha and a unique contribution he introduced to the philosophical thought of the world. They are the twelve links that form the wheel of becoming (*Bhava cakka*). In this Dhamma the Buddha pointed out how Ignorance (*Avijja*) conditions the Volitional Activities. (the *Sankhara*), Volitions conditions the Consciousness (*Vinnana*), Consciousness conditions the Mind and Matter (*Nama- Rupa*), Mind and Matter conditions the Six Senses (*Salayathana*), Six Senses conditions the Contact (*Phassa*), Contact conditions the Sensations (*Vedana*), Sensations conditions the Craving (*Tanha*), Craving conditions the Clinging (*Upadana*), Clinging conditions the Becoming (*Bhava*) - Cycle of Births and Deaths, Becoming conditions the Birth (*Jati*), and Birth conditions the Decay (*Jara*), Death (*Marana*), Suffering (*Dukkha*), Pain (Vedana), Grief (*Soka*) etc.etc.

Thus, this vicious circle of misery rolls on. In other words, the origin of each link depends upon the preceding one. As long as this chain of twelve causal relations operates, the wheel of becoming (*bhava-cakka*) keeps turning, bringing nothing but suffering. But we look at only the illusory momentary happiness and not the totality of our existence. In short we do not have wisdom. I have given a Buddhist perspective on wisdom, I am sure that people of other faiths can do likewise.

What is wrong with the present education system is that it starts with borders pertaining to age and so called particular talents that people have. So many borders have been created which may enable students to get knowledge but may not lead to wisdom. There are people who are very intelligent, well- informed and very knowledgeable but still because of lack of wisdom on their part these people some times cannot make right decisions. So much so from personal life to family life, community life to national life, including the situations in the world, lots of alienations, lots of frictions, lots of stresses and strains, lot of crimes and violence, finally even wars can occur. That is why I selected this theme, EDUCATION WITHOUT BORDERS TO PROMOTE WISDOM as an appropriate subject to these times.

When I think of Dr. Ramlal Parikh he was not only an intelligent, very well informed and knowledgeable person but was also a wise man. He was an activist in the right sense of the word. He was an activist to reform the education system that prevailed in India.

And from the positions he held including being a member of the Parliament in the Rajya Sabha he contributed immensely to change the legal or statutory framework pertaining to education both from the primary stage to university and post university stages. And within the limited resources he had in Gujarath Vidyapith he was able to introduce numerous programmes to put into concrete practice what he believed education should be. He excelled both in Adult Education and Community Education.

Now I will first comment on the borders we have created with regard to time. Because as I mentioned earlier what is called formal education starts when a child completes five years of age. This is so in Sri Lanka. In other countries the age of entry may be different. But a definite age is specified. In the Sarvodaya Movement in Sri Lanka from where I come, we have tried to do away with these age barriers. For a long long time we conceived of education as starting from birth. The period from birth to five years of age we named as nursery education or nursery school (early childhood development) or pre-school stage. In this preschool period our main concern was the nutrition, health care and psycho-social development of the child and educating the mothers. Undoubtedly what we introduced became very popular because we ourselves trained over 30,000 pre-school teachers and established over 8000 pre-schools all over the country. Even today over 6000 pre-schools are functioning under our supervision or our coordination in various parts in the country. They also include all communities and all religious groups in our society. But a few years ago we felt that this extension was not enough. It is because we had a time limit that the role we have to play as parents, teachers and members of the society to help the child to awaken his/her personality starts after the child's birth. We wanted to transcend this time limit. So about five years ago we decided that we should start the educational process at the very conception of the child in the mother's womb itself. Don't we believe that according to our Buddhist or Hindu Philosophy that the present life starts right there? The life energy or the cosmic energy or the karmic force that will contribute to evolve or create a living being has to enter the fertilized egg.

So when you look at this way which is our Asian way at human personality that means it is something to do not only with genes but

something to do with this endless process of cycle of births and deaths (*Bhava cakka*). This may go back to thousands or millions of years depending on the evolutionary process that a particular being went through. Now this understanding made us extend our educational conception or perception to the period when the child is in the mother's womb. We started training programmes four years ago and now it has become a regular feature where the mother the father or the couple or the pregnant mother and the prospective father are brought together to one of our centres, generally to our peace and meditation centre, Vishva Niketan, where a gynecologist and a meditation teacher teach them the science and art of communicating with the child who is in the mother's womb. We believe that whatever the mother eats, whatever the mother feels in the body, whatever the mother smells, whatever the mother hears or sees or whatever the mother thinks, all these six sectors can affect the child in a positive or negative way. When the child is to be influenced in a positive way then the mother has to be prepared for it spiritually, morally, culturally and socially. So we try to fill this gap by this kind of programme. The physician or the gynecologist's role is to educate the mother that her behavior and the functioning of her senses affect the child. So the mother has to have an extraordinary behavior during this time. This is so for the father and the other members of the family also.

In the Sarvodaya Movement now, time-wise we have gone back and we want to go forward also time-wise. In this life for a human being the last phase is when the person is on his or her death bed or he or she is breathing his or her last. So it is very essential that this person knows what death is. You may have heard of the Tibetan Book of Dying. So it is not enough for human beings to live in the right manner but also they should prepare to die in the correct way. That is why meditation helps not only young people but older people also particularly to understand the three principles of impermanence, suffering and egolessness. This means we have to extend our boundary of education beyond death also. We have to make education fit into our belief of cycle of birth and death. The Buddha always advised the monks as follows: "Mindfulness of death, when developed and pursued, is of great fruit and benefit. It plunges into the Deathless as its final end. Therefore you should develop mindfulness of death."

Now this is with regard to breaking the border with regard to time. What about the border pertaining to the partitioning of knowledge. Today a particular person has to be imparted with the particular knowledge in the particular system of education during a particular time. The more you get educated and the more learning you have from the general areas the more you come to specific areas or subdivisions. So much so the specialist in a particular subdivision in a discipline has lost touch or lost any knowledge pertaining to that subject taken as a whole. In other words common sense has been completely taken out from today's specialized education. This is a border we have to get rid of. This has to be done not only by educationists and those who are responsible for higher education in governmental and other institutions but also by common people.

Today in our world we are not happy with the kind of development system that has been imposed on our people. So much so poverty perpetuates. There is no where that a poverty-free society has been built by any of the formal educational systems. Similarly people are frustrated with restrictions imposed on them to their freedom. So many things that affect their lives including peace and war are determined by decision-makers up above. And these people have frustrated communities so much they have begun to understand that poverty and powerlessness go together. So as an alternative to this kind of injustice in our societies, organizations like Sarvodaya have been working to find alternative ways or methods just and fair for our people. In the same manner people who are not directly involved in education should think of breaking the borders that are prevailing in education and contribute more to the promotion of wisdom. Wisdom alone can contribute to peace and prosperity to our society.

Now let me go back again to the question of wisdom. All I know about it is from my own culture. And the basic understanding I may have acquired from the teachings of the Buddha. In the very first sermon of the Buddha, *Dhamma Chakka Pavattana Sutta*, Turning of the Wheel of Dharma, he used five words which have a great depth of meaning and vision.

Chakkun Udapadi – Awaken your Eyes (senses).
Gnanan Udapadi – Awaken your Knowledge
Panna Udapadi – Awaken your Wisdom
Vijja Udapadi – Awaken the Science in you
Aloko Udapadi – Awaken the Light in you

Now when you take these five progressive steps, at a later stage they really become one. Instantaneously all these five steps, the seeker after truth will follow. So can we incorporate this into the educational system that we are thinking of? But this is a Buddhist concept. People who do not inherit this heritage or do not see the relevance of this teaching in the present time will turn around and say that this is Buddhist and will not suit their tradition. Now this is another border we have to transcend. Buddha did not preach only to Buddhists neither did he want people to become Buddhists. He simply looked at the world and said "This is the reality as I see it. Reality of human personality is this. These 12 factors of Dependent Origination, the Paticca Sammupada Dharma, is what I see as the factors that keep us going in this unending cycle of Samsara- Cycle of births and deaths. And also I found that to break this cycle that brings about immense suffering to humans and others who are in the samsaric cycle I saw the Four Noble Truths. I only discovered them. I did not invent them. I found that there is a Noble Truth of Suffering. I saw the Noble Truth of the Cause that leads to Suffering, I saw the Noble Truth that this Cause can be Removed, and finally I found that there is the Noble Truth of the Way to remove the cause of this Suffering. Now these Four Noble Truths which are known as *Dukka Satya*, *Dukka Samudaya Satya, Dukka Samudaya Niroda Satya*, and *Dukka Nirodha Gamini Patipada Satya*, Four Noble Truths I preach to the world."

This has nothing to do with a particular creed. He was not creating creeds. If people belonging to different religions look at the essence of their teachings and then try to see whether there are any commonalities between their teachings and these, then in their own cultural contexts they should be able to break these religious borders and get enriched by the spiritual essence of their religions. Because what is essential is not religious dogmas but this spiritual awakening which can be brought about to promote wisdom in the society?

Much of the knowledge accumulated in science and technology today is used to manufacture armaments which are used for killing and destruction. Why does this happen. The answer is due to lack of wisdom. What is wisdom in the context of politics and economics? Politics and Economics go together. Politics and Economics create destructive situations when spirituality is absent from these two very important spheres of human activity.

Wisdom should be brought into economics to prevent the present day destruction that is taking place with regard to scarce natural resources, the exploitation with regard to human labour, the misuse of intelligence, which have brought about a situation of desertification, a situation where one after the other chains of natural disasters like Tsunamis and typhoons have occurred.

Similarly in politics spiritual values have to be inculcated. Even in our own countries politics has gone the wrong way in spite of ours being the homes of Buddha, Asoka, and Mahatma Gandhi among others. What is the politics we have and can you call this politics of love, compassion, sharing or isn't it politics of hatred, competition and accumulation of power and wealth? Look at the hopelessness created in Indian society by the prevalence of the caste system. What has education done to make people understand that this is absolute organized ignorance. You have this caste system in your society. Ramlal Parikh like his great senior Shri Moraji Desai and their leader Mahatma Gandhi worked very hard to fight this evil in Indian society. But it still prevails. How to break this barrier? I think we have to promote wisdom.

Owing to the present day "knowledge" based education that treats the individual, the society and the environment as separate entities, institutions or structures, we face a great danger. We need to evolve an education system that could effect a change in the way people think about their own self, their own family, their own village, the society and about all sentient beings living around them. Education without borders that promotes wisdom can awaken people's consciousness that makes the individual sensitive to societal needs and the natural environment surrounding him/her. Such spiritually awakened and spiritually empowered individuals will start effecting a change around them within their own families and communities. With this awakened mind the individual will

understand the inter-dependent and inter-connected nature of the man, the society and the environment. When people's consciousness is spiritually awakened in this manner, they will develop a deeper understanding about the economic and political systems that govern them and with this deeper understanding people will take charge in governing the economic and the political factors. People will start feeling the benefits of this spiritual approach to addressing their day to day community needs. These people will be spiritually equipped to understand more effectively a life style that is more sustainable, a people-centred political structure that serves them 'the people', a sustainable economy that adheres to equitable distribution of wealth and resources and harmonious with the bio-sphere, and a cultural value system that respects inherent dignity of all human beings, all sentient life and sanctity of Nature.

All my life, beginning with my school days up to today, I would like to confess, that uppermost in my mind and heart, my foremost objectives in life, were the eradication of poverty in my country and in the world, bringing about harmony among people by taking measures to break the barriers that exist nationally and internationally. I am sure this very same objectives were shared by Prof. Ramlal Parikh. That is why we were brought together by a karmic arrangement. Now these objectives and goals have not yet being realized in our countries and in the world. I think this is due to deficiency in wisdom at the levels of both national and international decision making establishments. Therefore I am thinking and working to find out how best to get the ordinary poor masses in the world who are in the majority to utilize their wisdoms to find solutions to their problems. Today there is hardly any scope to utilize their wisdom. This is because of the barriers that have been artificially erected in education by those who have vested interests. Therefore how can we get the common people to awaken their wisdom I believe the only way is for these people to have as much self governance as possible. I know that in India the Panchayath Raj Act amending the constitution of India has done a great deal towards achieving this objective. But that is not enough. I will not be content unless and until Mahatma Gandhi's vision of A Commonwealth of Village Republics in India as well as in Sri Lanka is realized.

This lecture delivered by Dr. A.T.Ariyaratne, President of the Sarvodaya Movement in Sri Lanka, at the Commemoration Meeting of Professor Ramlal Parikh, Ahamedabad, India on 21.11.2005

Acharya Sushil Kumar International Peace Award
Acceptance Speech of Dr. A. T. Ariyaratne
University of Toronto-Canada 23rd April 2006

ACHARYA SUSHIL KUMAR INTERNATIONAL PEACE AWARD ACCEPTANCE SPEECH

It is a real delight for me to come to Canada after a lapse of many years. Several Canadian organizations and entities have had very close development co-operation links with the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement of Sri Lanka for nearly two decades. This includes the Government of Canada through CIDA, IDRC, WUSC and others including several non-governmental agencies such as Canadian Crossroads, Canada World Youth, and Oxfam (Canada). We are very thankful to them for their contribution during the initial stages of the growth of our Movement, which has today evolved into one of the largest people's participatory self-help development movements in the world. Today, by offering me this Award you are really honouring the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement's continuous efforts for nearly half a century to eradicate poverty, to build peace in human minds and hearts, and thus creating a peaceful environment, enriching and protecting the society and the environment.

When Prof. David Clandfield, Chair of the Acharya Sushil Kumar International Peace Award Committee informed me of the unanimous decision they made to give this year's Award, I had every reason to be happy, one reason being the respect I have for Acharya Sushil Kumar who was a messenger of non-violence. I fervently believe in non-violence. At the outset I wish to thank the Award Committee for selecting me and on behalf of the family of Sarvodaya workers in Sri Lanka and other parts of the world I accept this Award with gratitude and all humility.

Acharya Sushil Kumarji passed away exactly 12 years ago, on the 22nd of April 1994, at his ashram in New Delhi. He was only 68 years of age and that was not an age for a great saint of his stature to leave us, to leave a world where his continued leadership and guidance were still needed to save humanity and the planet Earth

from war, hunger and environmental destruction. On several international meetings I had the good fortune of meeting him, talking to him, learning from him and being inspired by him. To be a recipient of an Award established in his name to honour his service to humanity places a great responsibility on me - a humble layman trying to follow in the footsteps of this great spiritual leader.

I vividly remember his words of wisdom spoken at the Global Forum of Parliamentarians and Spiritual Leaders held in Oxford, Moscow and Kyoto. I too participated in these meetings as an Honorary International President of the World Conference on Religions for Peace. I listened to him at the World Parliament of Religions held in Chicago in 1993 of which I was also a President. There is no way that a layman, a family man like myself or anybody else can accomplish during a lifetime what a practising monk of the stature of His Holiness Acharya Sushil Kumar accomplished. Leaving home at the tender age of seven, living and travelling with his teacher Jain Muni Shri Chhotelalji Maharaj, and taking vows of a monk at the age of sixteen and devoting his entire life in the service of humanity and all living beings, is not a life that can be easily followed by ordinary family men like us.

Once a monk, one has to renounce the family life and get detached from all worldly attachments and pleasures. Some monks decide to withdraw from the society and retreat into a solitary place, a forest for example, and undergo strict disciplines and struggle very hard to attain self-realization. Acharya Sushil Kumar chose a different path. He was in the world but not of the world. He demonstrated how a monk could use his inner spiritual attainments to educate the people to confront the problems of the outer world with a spiritual thrust.

He founded the World Fellowship of Religions in 1950 and by the 1960s organized the interfaith movement, bringing together millions of people, from commoners to heads of states. The five World Religious Conferences he organized in India opened the doors for him to venture out into the world with his message of non-violence. From 1975 onwards until he passed away in 1994 Acharya Sushil Kumar was a front line peace activist and a spiritual leader who educated the world leaders that the path to peace lay through the path of non-violence. He worked shoulder to shoulder with the world

religious leaders to build a strong inter-religious movement devoted to world peace, development and environmental preservation. His indefatigable efforts and organizing skills resulted in creating institutions around the world devoted to the study of Jainism, Kundalini Science and Yoga. He founded research centres and established the International Mahavir Jain Mission here in Toronto.

So far I have been talking about Acharya Sushil Kumar whom we are commemorating today. Now please permit me to place before you some facts about the Sarvodaya Movement I represent and about some of its past achievements, present activities and future vision.

Sarvodaya is a word coined by Mahatma Gandhi. It means "welfare of all". We adopted this word and gave it the meaning "Awakening of All". Therefore the meaning of the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement is " A movement to Awaken All by Sharing our Time, Thoughts, Efforts and Resources".

Acharya Sushil Kumar followed the Teachings of Lord Mahavira and became a monk in the religious order he founded. I am a lay follower of the Teachings of the Buddha who was a contemporary of Lord Mahavira. These two teachings have much in common. Therefore, it is not incorrect to say that Buddhists and Jains are philosophically closer to each other than followers of most other religions.

In the Sarvodaya Movement, inspired by the teachings of the Buddha and non-violent methods of social transformation demonstrated by Mahathma Gandhi, we have as our core principle Respect for All Living Beings. The members of the Sarvodaya Movement try to practice this principle by adhering to non-violent methods and techniques in all its activities.

The key concept is Metta or Loving Kindness. Those who practice loving kindness have to engage themselves in Compassionate Actions to help human beings and all other creatures to overcome the sufferings they experience. This kind of compassionate action we call Karuna. All development activities and welfare services we engage ourselves in come under the portfolio of Karuna or compassionate action. All we expect for ourselves is Altruistic Joy or detached happiness that we get when we see the joy the beneficiaries get as a result of our services. This joy we get out of

service to others we call Muditha. If over a period of time when we practice these principles of loving kindness, compassionate action and altruistic joy, we can develop Equanimity or Upekkha as an integral part of our awakening personality.

On these principles we attracted thousands of volunteers, mostly youth, to work in poverty stricken rural communities to construct access roads, water reservoirs, irrigation canals, drinking water wells, school buildings, dwellings, community centres, sanitary facilities and so on. I am sure you will realize that in this work there is both a spiritual content and a development outcome. We say ' We build the Road and the Road builds us.'

Another characteristic of our Movement is its people's participatory nature. We do not wait till the government or an outside agency comes into our villages to advise us or give orders to us as to how we should develop our villages. On the contrary, the people in the community themselves through heart to heart dialogue discover their true needs. Then, with whatever resources they have (such as skilled or unskilled labour, land, rural technologies and know how), they strive to satisfy their basic human needs.

Sarvodaya has identified ten basic human needs that must be satisfied in order for a society to be called "civilized". These basic human needs include water, clothing, food, housing, health care, energy requirements, the psychological and physical environment, communication, education, spiritual and cultural needs. I find it ironic that even in the over-developed West, there are those who lack physical resources to satisfy their basic human needs. They are homeless and go to bed with empty bellies. And, there are others who lack spiritual resources. They have too many technological toys, yet go to bed with empty hearts.

By satisfying the ten basic needs, by self-reliant community action, four of the most essential community-building ingredients become incorporated into our social and economic lives. Very briefly, these are principles of Sharing, Pleasant Language, Constructive Action and Equality in association. These help people to progress from personality awakening to family and community awakening.

For nearly quarter of a century, Sri Lanka has suffered from an unnecessary violent conflict. This conflict was caused by politicians who used the religious and ethnic differences in people for them to get and hold political power. This exploitation takes place by unscrupulous "leaders" in all ethnic communities.

The root of the conflict lies in the colonial period, which destroyed indigenous methodologies for the governance of people and the resolution of conflicts. As we can see around the world today, the struggles of people to emerge from under the suffocating blanket of the colonial era continues.

As strong believers in the oneness of humanity and in non-violence and justice, Sarvodaya strictly kept away from taking sides in the conflict. We took every possible reconciliatory step to bring relief to the victims of civil and military violence, to rehabilitate all those who were affected, to bring about reconciliation, to engage ourselves in reconstruction work and finally help them to get into a reawakening process where like other communities they can engage themselves in self development activities. We call this the "5R" Approach: Relief, Rehabilitation, Reconstruction, Reconciliation and Reawakening.

When the Tsunami destruction occurred on 26th December 2004, we followed the same 5R method to help the affected people. Within a few hours we went into action - and have not stopped. Sarvodaya was adjudged as the best voluntary organization that contributed to tsunami relief and rehabilitation work. Sarvodaya was awarded the UN Habitat Scroll last year for its tsunami efforts.

The civil war that has been going on for the past 23 years needs a lasting solution. The Cease Fire Agreement (CFA) that was signed by the parties in 2002 has brought about a dramatic reduction in violence, but it is not peace. There have been a lot discussions and peace processes initiated by the Government and the LTTE but a lasting solution is not within sight. While Sarvodaya is giving all encouragement and whatever support it can to the official peace process with Norwegian mediation, Sarvodaya has its own unique approach to tackle this problem.

We believe that this is not a problem between the Sinhalese and the Tamils or between the Government and the LTTE. We believe that this is a struggle between Violence and Non-violence. We have to do everything to weaken or reduce the tendency to resort to violence from both sides and strengthen the forces of non-violence in both. This can only be achieved if all of the ethnic communities (Sinhala, Tamil, Muslim and others) can be made to reject violence and injustice and uphold non-violence and justice in all parts of the country and in everything we do.

The struggle between violence and non-violence plays itself out in all corners of our world. The leaders of the United States speak about a "War on Terror", but "terror" is only a particular brand or flavour of violence. It is the willingness to use violence to solve problems between people that creates all the "terrorism" that the world experiences today.

Sarvodaya believes that to build a critical mass of peace consciousness and build non-violent and just attitudes among the people in our country, we have to work in three inter-related sectors. These three sectors are - consciousness, economics and power. Transformation of consciousness is a spiritual process; transformation of the economy is a development exercise and the transformation of the power structure is a political and constitutional matter. In all three sectors we are working to build a critical mass of transformation. Sarvodaya believes that building a critical mass for peace is the only way to bring about lasting peace in Sri Lanka.

Sarvodaya activities are going on in over 15,000 villages in Sri Lanka. We help the villagers to go through a psychological infrastructure-building phase, a social infrastructure-building phase, a legal institutionalization phase, an economic infrastructure-building phase and a political self-governance phase. If we can double our reach to 30,000 villages then we would have this three-pronged transformation process taking place in the whole country.

This kind of peace building process is the opposite of top-down or macro approaches to making peace. In this upside-down world, "peace keepers" are soldiers with guns, trained to kill, and "peace makers" are the ones who start the wars in the first place.

Our kind of peace making does not catch headlines in the news media. Neither does it come to the serious attention of those who control armies and armaments, legal or otherwise, governments legally constituted or regimes imposed by force, international organizations (not excluding the UN agencies), administrators and corporate business interests. In Buddhist philosophical terms these vested interests are steeped in organized Greed (Lobha), organized Ill-will (Dosa) and organized Delusion (Moha). They look at very superficial, materialistic and narrow divisive elements in human society and do not go into the deeper relationships that exist among human beings, between human groups and other living beings and nature. They do not take into consideration the role played by cosmic forces in determining the relationships that humans build among themselves and nature for mutual survival or collective destruction. What the Buddha preached as Pancha Niyama Dharmas or Five Cosmic Laws appear to be unknown to these peace makers.

If human beings, human societies, other forms of living beings, plant kingdom and the environment are to survive and sustain themselves the cosmic laws pertaining to genetic order, climatic order, karmic (cause and effect) order, orders pertaining to phenomena and mind must be obeyed by human beings and human societies. This is not happening today.

Beneath the orderly society we believe we have, an utterly chaotic situation prevails, which results in conflicts and wars as well as natural disasters and self-inflicted harms from which humanity is made to suffer today. For example: in my country, as well as in yours, the suicide rate is at epidemic proportions. All of our "leaders" know this, but few of them address the problem. This is because the problem lies in the realm of the spirit or soul, not in the realm of legislation and bureaucracy. We are encouraged to think about suicide as an individual problem, as a mental disease. However, we should look on this problem as the result of structured spiritual emptiness.

I mentioned earlier about the five phases of village development that Sarvodaya is engaged in. To assist village communities to go through these five progressive steps Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement has created 345 divisional centres, 34 district coordination centres, 8 development education institutes and a central headquarters

with 15 specialized departments. When one perceives deeply the integrated processes thus released by the Movement to bring about a transformation in human consciousness, in the rural economy and the power structure, one can conclude that side by side with the highly advertised macro peace processes there are alternative people centered peace processes going on in Sri Lanka without interruption. Sarvodaya undoubtedly is the largest people's peace process. This process ensures establishment of peace in the minds of people, while promoting peace in the environment and building a firm foundation for peace in society at the same time.

Since 1983 Sarvodaya has organized numerous peace meditation programs in all parts of the country. We have held over 50 national level peace walks and peace meditation programs wherein nearly 2 million people have so far participated. In 2002 over 600,000 people in Anuradhapura, and in 2004 over 300,000 people in Colombo participated in mass interfaith meditation programs for peace. The next one will bring together one million people again in the sacred city of Anuradhapura on 2nd October 2006, Mahatma Gandhi's birthday. We have named this event Vishwa Sama Samadhi - Building A Universal Peace Consciousness. This is sponsored jointly with the Alliance for a New Humanity headquarters in Puerto Rico and whose President is world renowned Dr. Deepak Chopra.

Vishva Niketan, the International Peace and Meditation Centre established by Sarvodaya, is playing a major role in transforming the consciousness of people for peace. In addition to the above mass meditation programs it organizes, with the support of Sarvodaya Peace Brigades, there are other peace meditation training programs that Vishwa Niketan organizes for the benefit of expectant mothers and their husbands, school children and teachers, prisoners, prison officials and those serving in the police and armed services, business executives and religious personnel. The multiplier effects of such programs certainly brings about positive influence on the psychological environment of our people to the extent of denouncing violence and war and not even talking and thinking of war. If wars begin in the minds of men, peace too should begin in their minds.

Greed based competitive economy which has been imposed on our people is another contributory factor for our conflicts and wars. Though it is an extremely difficult task, the Sarvodaya Economic

Enterprises Development Services (SEEDS) has offered the people in Sarvodaya villages an alternative path to satisfying their basic human needs. SEEDS is operating in about 6,000 villages so far. Self-reliance and community participation are the key factors in this approach.

The third contributory factor for creating conflict, according to our belief, is the way political power is exercised. We do not have faith in top-down political command systems. We believe in participatory forms of governance. We have put our faith in the Gandhian system of village self-governance. Already, in one thousand villages - Sinhala, Tamil, Muslim and mixed- we have helped people to establish Gram Swaraj Councils - Village Self-governing Councils. We are carefully watching and monitoring how they function.

I have tried to give you a glimpse of what the Sarvodaya Shramanadana Movement had tried to do for five decades to contribute to development and peace in Sri Lanka and in the world. Our work is an integrated approach where we try to awaken one and all spiritually, morally, culturally, socially, economically and politically. In this regard, I believe we are all walking in the same path as our beloved Acharya Sushil Kumar, in whose name we are gathered together today.

So once again I wish to thank the Board as well as all of you who have come here to grace this occasion. Both the recognition you have given me and the monetary award that comes with it I will devote for the promotion of the Movement for which I have dedicated my life.

Some Previous International Awards Conferred on Dr. A.T.Ariyaratne

1969	Ramon Magsaysay Award for Community Leadership, Phillippines
1982	King Boudewyn Award for International Development, Belgium
1986	Alan Shawn Feinstein World Hunger Award, Brown University, USA
1990	August Forel Award from the Good Templars Movement, Denmark
1990	Jamnalal Bajaj Award for Promoting Gandhian Values Globally, India
1992	Niwano Peace Prize Japan
1995	Ilga Memorial Award for Public Service Korea
1996	Hubert M Humphrey Award for promoting human rights USA
1996	Mahatma Gandhi Peace Prize India
1999	Life Time Achievement Award USA-Asia Foundation
2000	'Saratha Dharma Visharada' title from World Buddhist Foundation
2004	Spirit of Detroit Award USA
2005	Life Time Achievement Award - Novartis Foundation for Sustainable Development Switzerland
2005	Prof. Ram Lal Parikh Award for World Literacy India
	Moraji Desai Award for Community Education India
2005	Global Humanitatrian Award by Alliance for A New Humanity Puerto Rico

This lecture delivered by Dr. A.T.Ariyaratne, President of the Sarvodaya Movement in Sri Lanka, at the University of Toronto- Canada 23rd April 2006.

Convocation Address at Gujerat Vidyapit,
Ahmedabad October 18th 2006

Are We Addressing Real Issues In Our Educational Institutions?

Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor, Deans, Members of Faculties, Distinguished Invitees, New Graduates, Students, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you for the honour you have bestowed upon me by inviting me to deliver the 53rd Convocation Address of your illustrious Gujerat Vidyapit this year. This is a heavy responsibility for me as this kind of academic exercise is beyond my scholarly attainments. However I had the courage to accept this invitation because the Great Mahatma Gandhi who conceived the idea of this Vidyapit himself was not a scholar in the usually accepted narrow meaning of the term. Further more our most respected Chancellor of this Deemed University Shri Ravindra Varma was the one who sounded me first to come for this event last year followed by our esteemed Vice Chancellor Prof Sudarshan Iyenger.

My relationship with the Vidyapit goes back to early eighties when I delivered the Jamnalal Bajaj lecture series. From that time I had a very close relationship with our beloved former Vice Chancellor the late Prof Ramlal Parikh. Last year I had the privilege of delivering the Ramlal Parikh Commemoration lecture in this city. So this is one way of paying my humble tribute to this institution as well as to all the great educators who built it up to the present status.

Sometimes I get very depressed when I see the contexts in which words like learning, teaching, training and education are used. So are the words like knowledge, wisdom and enlightenment. The meanings attributed to these words today and

the way students comprehend them are very different from what we learned in our school days. In our formative days in life these words indicated great sanctity, a philosophical depth and all of these converged into the vision of a new value-based society where contentment and happiness for all would be ensured. I wonder whether commercialism that has overtaken all other forms of value- based human endeavors is responsible for this decadence in our education systems.

Provision of education and health has developed into very lucrative money spinning businesses and teachers and healers have lost their identity as servers of humanity. They are rather paid servants of an economic system where the owners make money out of sufferings and ignorance of people. The founders and promoters of these educational enterprises are no longer Mahatma Gandhis, Gurudev Rabindranath Tagores, Annie Besants or Grundtvigs, They are clever entrepreneurs, who know the art of making money by selling even knowledge and skills for those who seek them for the same purpose of making money.

In Hitopadesha, there is a Sanskrit stanza which describes the present society in a very comprehensive way.

" Nissara prutuvi niraushadi rasa nica mahatvan gatahh
Raja artha parayana bhuvitale vipranya karmasthitha
Bharya bandhusu vairi hradayan putre pitur dweshatha
Ittambhuta vidan kaliyuge dharmo vananthan gathahh."

This can be rendered into English as follows:

"Earth has become infertile, has lost all its therapeutic qualities, Rascals pose as gentlemen, Rulers do not enforce laws, Instead they accumulate power and wealth, Religious leaders do everything else except practicing religion, husbands and wives hate each other, parents dislike their children and so are the children alienated from the parents, Seeing all this in the Kaliyuga, Dharma runs away from society and hides in the jungle."

Don't you think that this is the reality we are facing today in almost all the ancient countries which earlier had great value-based civilizations ? We can summarize our problems as follows:

* Pollution of nature and destruction of the life-support systems
* Degenerate community and national level leadership
* Bad governance associated with bribery, corruption and inefficiency
* Lack of spiritual guidance by religious leaders
* Disruption of family relationships
* Widespread poverty, crimes and even wars
* A society without a dharmic vision or spiritual content

Our world civilization is in crisis. Gandhiji foresaw what is to come and during his life time did his very best not only to warn us but also to suggest practical measures that would have to be taken to avert such an eventuality. He practiced what he preached. During his 21 years in Africa, not withstanding his main struggle to promote Satyagraha to achieve freedom and dignity for Indians and indigenous Africans he also experimented with his own children and others' children on alternative educational systems for them in places like the Phoenix Settlement. Last month when I was invited to South Africa to receive the Mahatma Gandhi International Award for Reconciliation and Peace, I had the opportunity to visit Phoenix Settlement and other historic places connected with Gandhiji's life in South Africa.

I am sure when Gandhiji conceived of higher educational institutions for India like the Gujerat Vidyapit he was thinking of building up learning communities which would successfully meet the above challenges. These institutions have been evolving and developing during the last fifty years or more. It is time to look back and do a revaluation of the whole system in the context of what Gandhiji conceived and what was achieved taking into consideration the realities of the present day world.

In the present day world including India and Sri Lanka the mainstream vision is neither Gandhian nor Buddhist even though some cynics blame Gandhi or the Buddha or other great spiritual leaders for the sad state of affairs in our countries. The main trend is toward western dominated, materialistic, competitive, and

exploitative objectives and mechanisms that transform these into concrete realities. The relationships between man and nature, man and man, man and society lack the spirit of mutual respect, love and co-operation. A mad rush for power, wealth and sense gratification is driving humanity as a whole towards an unpredictable but surely a disastrous end. Globalization of the economy and the critical and decisive role that is played by corporations, financial institutions, money markets and related businesses have facilitated this trend globally. Numerous violent conflicts within and even between countries, prevalence of illegal arms trading, expanding drug trafficking and so on are a part of this evil system. To replace this kind of mind-set with some sane vision is not an easy task particularly when we try it from the centres of economic and political power. I believe it was the realization of this fact that made Gandhiji advocate the concept of Gram Swaraj as the foundation of a new political economy for India and the world.

What attracted me to the Gandhian approach for social transformation was its holistic nature- the idea of working for the wellbeing of all- Sarvodaya. As a young man who had taken to the teaching profession, when I heard a vivid explanation on Sarvodaya given by Prof. G.Ramachandran at the New World Education Conference in New Delhi in 1960, I immediately found what I was looking for – a vision to guide me. As a follower of the Teachings of the Buddha – the Awakened One – instantaneously it dawned on me that that Vision should be To Awaken All while Awakening Myself first. I came back home and summoned a national conference of members of the Shramadana Movement which was founded by us three years before that and renamed it as the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement of Sri Lanka. We did a study of the teachings of Gandhiji, Acharya Vinoba Bhave and writings of Sri Jayaprakash Narayan and drew up our own short, medium and long term agenda to move toward a Sarvodaya Social Order.

When your Vice- Chancellor talked to me over the telephone he was keen that I should give you a brief account of the village reawakening programme we are successfully carrying out in Sri Lanka. I shall attempt to do it in spite of the time constraints I have in an address of this nature.

We who founded the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement in Sri Lanka were all young teachers and students. We had not seen or heard Gandhi though our older generation had. We had a few reputed educationists and learned monks to guide us in the new movement we founded though we did not have blessings and patronage from national leaders like in the Indian Movement. In a way this was a blessing in disguise because we could experiment with and innovate many things which Gandhiji would have approved if he was living. The Sarvodaya ideal we interpreted according to Buddha Dhamma as the Awakening of All, Respect for all living beings. We have been going on facing every obstacle as it came for almost fifty years. I don't want to claim that we were successful in reaching our goals. Nor do I want to say we failed in our attempts. May be we are somewhere in between. But I am sure of one thing. That is we are going in the right direction to build an awakening human being and an awakening society. So I think it is best that I share with you some of the insights we gained in this process.

We selected five levels at which human society has to be reawakened. They are:

1. Level of Individual Human Personality
   : Purna Paurushodaya
2. Level of the Human Family
   : Kutumbodaya
3. Level of the Village or Urban Community
   : Gramodaya
   : Nagarodaya
   : Grama swarajya
   : Nagara swarajya
4. Level of the Nation
   : Deshodaya
   : Desha Swarajya
5. Level of the World or Universe
   : Vishvodaya

For each of these levels we had to work out the positive factors that contribute to the Awakening process as against the negative factors that adversely affect the process. For example Purna Paurushodaya means the fullest awakening of the human

personality. From the conception of a human being in a mother's womb right through the period of pregnancy continued through infancy and early childhood there are numerous factors that contribute to the awakening of his/her personality or its degeneration. In a good education system this extremely important period in a human being's life is not ignored.

In fact when Gandhi started his educational experiments in South Africa he emphasized that learning begins at the conception of the child in the mother's womb. Our Movement in Sri Lanka has developed educational and training programmes for expectant mothers and their husbands so that the necessary spiritual, social and physical environment is created by the parents to communicate with the child from this stage so that their personality development can take place without a hindrance. Provision of day care centres and preschools under trained Sarvodaya workers is the next stage of helping the children to establish a firm nutritional, physical, emotional, psychological, intellectual and spiritual foundation.

In Sri Lanka primary, secondary and higher education is in the hands of the government even though in recent years, a lot of so called international schools have been started by private organizations as profit making businesses without any hindrance from the government. May be this is a part of the free market system or the globalization process that has entered into the educational field. However the Sarvodaya Movement does not have schools of its own for children of school-going age with the exception of children who are subject to physical or mental abnormalities.

During the last forty eight years Sarvodaya philosophy and activities have spread out into over 15400 village communities in Sri Lanka. These villages have their own independent Sarvodaya Shramadana Societies which are linked to 345 Divisional Sarvodaya Centres, 35 District Centres and 8 Development Education Institutes. While giving these centres full freedom to operate we have a very well organized Headquarters complex coordinating, guiding and supporting the entire national programme. All the necessary specialized services required by the villages for their village reawakening or gramodaya and village self-governance or Grama Swarajya are facilitated from the

Headquarters and other District Centres and Develoipment Education Institutes.

Our Sarvodaya institutions are open to school children, out-of-school youth, university and other students in higher education, village women, community leaders, Buddhist monka and other clergy, government servants, police and security personnel, prison officials and prisoners, private sector employees and so on. Though we do not run high schools or universities we have thus found access to all strata of society to impart our knowledge on sustainable development and training in the needed skills. Thus we have been able to have an influence on the formulation of national policies as well as contributing to national development. While living in a society which is dominated by materialistic values and highly self-centred aims in human lives, we in Sarvodaya attempted to work towards our objective of a Sarvodaya Social Order, a social order where Spiritual, Moral, Cultural, Social, Economic and Political components are harmoniously balanced.

We have developed for each of these sectors training modules and institutions whose services can be sought by village societies according to their needs and particular development stage in their journey towards village self-governance. We are helping every village to awaken through five stages of self-development where they progressively build (1) A psychological infra-structure (2) A social infra-structure (3) A legal framework (4) An economic infra-structure and (5) A people's participatory self-governance system. To co-ordinate these activities at a national level we have three main departments, namely, A Social Empowerment Department, A Technological Empowerment Department and An Economic Empowerment Department. Under each of these departments we have specialized units catering to all the felt needs of the people with whom we work. If one looks at this total programme it is obvious that this is a practical demonstration of what Gandhiji described as Education for Life, Through Life and Throughout Life.

Our society is an extremely divided society, the worst and most destructive division being in the power and party political field. Party politics is mostly responsible for the communal hatred, religious strife, corruption, violence and civil strife prevailing in

our societies. In a system of governance mostly modeled after an alien colonial system where with every change of person holding a particular ministerial post, policies also change, Sarvodaya is fortunate that it developed as a movement outside the governmental structure but within the spirituo-cultural traditions of the nation and the accepted legal norms and laws of the land. Even though a significant proportion of politicians in power and the administrators who implement their policies have at some stage or other gone through Sarvodaya training and experience yet when they are in positions of authority and power most of them get absorbed into the generally, corrupt, wasteful, inefficient , centralized and undemocratic system. All they can do when they are thus caught in a vicious system where self-aggrandizement gets inculcated in their psyche is to pay lip service to the good we are doing. There are so many people paying lip service to Mahatma Gandhi while doing the opposite. They little realize that we are not just do-gooders but committed non-violent revolutionaries who are struggling to build a society where justice and peace will prevail.

Without trying to directly confront the existing power political system or the destructively competitive economic system both of which are closely linked to the neo-colonial international exploitative systems, our movement in Sri Lanka is attempting to educate, organize, train and promote rural and less affluent urban communities to build an alternative economic and political system where they can become the builders of their own future social system. Prof.Denis Goulet, famous author, of the Notre Dame University once described our work as a practice of Termite Theory. Leading role for such a transformation is played by educated young men and women who have undergone training in various special skills in Sarvodaya Development Education Institutes. Compared to the thousands of young men and women who enter the employment market purely to earn a living ours may be a negligible fraction. But their qualitative input not only to earn an income but to render a service to the country -with high ideals- is setting an example to the others.

Having given you a very brief account of the village reawakening programme as requested of me by your Vice Chancellor, now allow me to elaborate on an aspect of our work,

which is very relevant to this institute, to those of you who are leaving it after having successfully completed a course of study in it and to all those here who are concerned with the further growth and development of this Institute and of this country as a whole.

In all of our development work we have set before the people not only the goal of personality development at individual, family, community levels and so on as I have mentioned earlier, but simultaneously with such personality development the achievement of what we in Sarvodaya term, the Ten Basic Human Needs. These were not framed by me but by the people themselves almost at the very start of our work. As chosen by them the Ten Basic Human Needs are as follow:

- Environment
- Water
- Clothing
- Food
- Housing
- Health Care
- Communication
- Fuel (Energy)
- Education
- Spiritual and Cultural Needs

To those of you who are graduating today and thinking of employment, and may be to others as well, it may come as a surprise that " employment" has not been listed as a basic need. This is not an oversight. It was very deliberate. We do not believe in "employment" for the sake of "employment". We believed and still do believe that employment should be for the achievement of the Ten Basic Needs as was spelt out by our people almost at the very start of our Movement. We want to promote Right Livelihood. It is not a full employment society we are after. We want to build a full engagement society.

At this point I wish to make an appeal to those of you, who have received your degrees and are on the threshold of a long and fruitful career ahead of you. Whatever career path you choose, you should at least occasionally ask yourself,

"What is the contribution I am making towards meeting the basic human needs of our people, particularly of those who are poor?" As a graduate of Gujerat Vidyapit you have a bounden duty to do so. Soon you will realize that poverty is closely related to powerlessness. "What can I do empower people ?" you will ask yourself.

It may be that the graduates of Gujerat Vidyapit are not employed as the term is usually understood. But if the graduates of Gujerat Vidyapit contribute to the achievement of the basic needs of particularly the poor in this country, as well as in others, by empowering them, then I say the graduates of Gujerat Vidyapit are very gainfully employed and engaged.

I continue my address, in the fervent hope that the few remarks I make, may have some influence on the future directions of this Institute. These remarks in no way underestimate the tremendous achievements of this unique institution. We in South Asia, which has produced the Buddha, Mahatma Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore, and a host of other great men and women, should profit from our heritage which has never extolled the accumulation of material wealth and giving vent to all our desires as goals in life. We should not allow the goal of unbridled consumption accompanying "globalization" to subvert what we have valued for ages. There is now not only "globalization" which is regarded as being inevitable but at the same time increasing attention to "sustainable development". One cannot have the latter with the former as currently conceived.

We at Sarvodaya firmly believe that the resources of the Earth should be used as a matter of priority for meeting the Basic Human Needs of All People and then the secondary and tertiary needs as they may be identified by the people and not by those who have the money to "create a demand" for whatever they may produce for a profit even if it means an unsustainable life on Earth.

Such a belief has very significant implications for higher education institutes such as Gujerat Vidaypit. To begin with, such a belief should permeate the thinking of all of us, the teachers, the learners, the religious and lay leaders, the politicians, the administrators, the scientists and all those who take the decisions

and implement plans, supposedly for the welfare of the people of this Earth. Gujerat Vidyapit should be a centre from which such wisdom flows outwards and fills the hearts and minds of those who govern and those who are governed; those who produce and those who consume; those who create new knowledge and those who apply them; those who preach and those who listen; in fact all. This is a very tall order for an education institute. But this is no ordinary institute. It was conceived by a man who did the impossible, namely, defeat the most powerful empire on Earth through the power of truth.

Please permit me to quote a few lines from the remarks I made in Durban, South Africa, when receiving the Mahatma Gandhi International Award for Reconciliation and Peace on the 13th of September, ie last month. .

" Among numerous experiments with Truth that Gandhiji tried out, discovery and implementation of the concept of "Satyagraha" is unique. Satyagraha literally means holding fast to Truth. Satyagraha may even be defined as any form of non- violent action taken to uphold truth. Truth cannot be separated from non-violence and justice. They always go together. During the days of Mahatma Gandhi there is no doubt that Satyagraha played a key role not only to win freedom but also bring about justice.

One hundred years have passed since Gandhiji started the Satyagraha Movement. When we look around our own communities, nations or the world as a whole we can see numerous instances where the basic human needs of people are denied and where basic human rights of people are blatantly violated. There are violent confrontations going on within communities and within countries and even between nations. Most of this violence is a reaction to the denial of fundamental justice to the people. If people knew ways and means of resistance to injustice without resorting to violence or different techniques of Satyagraha, then the majority of people will prefer non-violent action.

Unfortunately after the demise of Gandhiji and the gradual withdrawal of his closest disciples from the mainstream Gandhian vision of a new society, the concept and practice of "Satyagraha"

was replaced by what I may call " Pakshagraha"- holding fast to political parties. When justice was denied from one party in power they rushed to another party little realizing that they were contributing to the destruction of democracy and replacing it by a kind of party- cracy. If we had evolved a non –party system of participatory democracy, then when justice is denied, we could have resorted to Satyagraha.

We need a renewal of the Satyagraha Movement to serve the modern day needs of non–violent action to fight injustice and violence and bring about reconciliation, peace and development."

In its research and educational work, Gujerat Vidyapit, should re-examine and re-explore the question of the ownership of the resources of this Earth. I am aware that the Chancellor of this Deemed University, Shri Ravindra Varma, in addition to his other excellent and extensive writings on Gandhiji, has expounded his concept of trusteeship very lucidly. In the context of what appears now to be "an unsustainable life on earth", in all parts of the world, the concept of "trusteeship" needs to be re-visited and if necessary re-formulated. Gujerat Vidyapit has the spiritual legacy and the moral obligation to lead the world in this regard.

The belief we firmly hold, and I may rightly say the policy that we advocate, regarding the use of the resources of this Earth, has other implications for Gujerat Vidyapit. Such a policy regarding the use of the Earth's resources and the formulation of Basic Human Needs and secondary and tertiary needs requires the generation of new knowledge and the transmission of that knowledge to the people at large and not just to a select and isolated few.

I referred earlier to the development work we do in Sarvodaya in Sri Lanka and mentioned the Sarvodaya Development Education Institutes. We are currently engaged in an exercise to improve the quality of our education work. Please allow me to quote from one of our working documents to which I have made some amendments to suit this occasion.

"Sarvodaya development work in the village communities it works with is essentially educational. The initial shramadana camps conducted in the villages have an in-built education

component. The work to be done is decided by the village community. The organization of the camp, in which the village community is very much involved, requires the consideration of such aspects as the labour force required to do the work, the tools and equipment needed, the food needed, the residential accommodation needed, etc. Such organizational work is part of the education of the community. It is learning-by- doing, harnessing the knowledge and skills available within the community.

This type of initial educational work is followed by institutional training at various Sarvodaya centers at different levels. Short-term courses are conducted in such areas as pre-school education, community health and sanitation, savings and credit, village-level planning, etc. Private establishments have also been utilized to conduct such short-term courses, specially in relation to the development of vocational skills in such areas as welding. The educational work is always related to some activity or activities at community level. The practical application of whatever is learnt is an essential ingredient in the Sarvodaya educational work. Another way of stating this is that the training courses organized by Sarvodaya are based on the needs expressed by the communities.

For some time now the Sarvodaya Sangamaya has been of the view that the educational services it now provides to the community need to be at greater depth and over a wider range. It is no longer adequate, for example, to train persons at community level to run a savings and credit scheme or micro-finance activities. While they should acquire such skills, they need to have a deeper understanding of the economic forces which impinge on the rural economy, how the local and national markets operate, what is the "world market" which is often referred to, what is "globalisation" and how does it affect the community, etc.

In the sphere of education, it is no longer adequate to simply learn how to start and run a pre-school. They need to know about the development of children, the effect of malnutrition of the pregnant mother on the growth of the fetus, the effect of malnutrition and lack of stimulation on the growth of the brain, etc.

From another perspective they need to know of certain characteristics of the current formal system of education, not only in Sri Lanka but all over the world. On the whole it is designed to perpetuate the status quo. Its benefits are mostly for those who already "have". Such deeper and wider considerations are needed if people are to function adequately in a true democracy. What in fact is a "democracy?". These are questions which engage the attention of the people and opportunities should be provided to get information about them, to exchange ideas with others, to learn what people in other countries are thinking about these things, etc.

At the village/community level, people like to experiment. It may be the trying out of a new method of cultivation; processing of village produce to make other products either for marketing or for consumption; breeding a new variety of a food crop or plants for horticulture; trying out alternative energy sources for home use, etc. People should have easy access to institutes which provide the assistance they need. They should have the opportunity of knowing what has been done by others in the areas/problem of interest to them; they should have access to expert opinion on what they want to do; they should have the assistance of technicians to turn out any tool or equipment they may wish to. Essentially people should solve their own problems and they should be assisted in the process in the many different ways needed.

It is also essential to expose people at the village level to developments taking place in other parts of the world which are very relevant to their own life. They may draw inspiration for their own lives from such an exposure. While newspapers and other media may give publicity to such work, there is a need to study such development work at greater depth to gain an understanding of the circumstances which gave rise to such work, the factors which made them a success, similarities and differences between those circumstances and the local circumstances, the scale of the operation, etc. A deeper understanding is essential if people are to profit from such experiences by way of adapting them or trying out new ideas arising from them."

I like to suggest that Gujerat Vidyapit should make the same assumption which we in Sarvodaya are going to make in improving the quality of our education work, namely, that any

village/community in Sri Lanka is a potential learning center working in close collaboration with associated Development Education Institutes. The problems of the village/community as perceived by them, should be the priority areas for the research and development work of Gujerat Vidyapit . Gujerat Vidyapit may be regarded as being effective to the extent that it assists the communities in dealing satisfactorily with their problems. The community will participate in this process. The human, material and other resources which Gujerat Vidyapit may attempt to acquire will be such as to facilitate and promote this process. Gujerat Vidyapit should also co-opt the expertise available in the villages/communities and recognize them as visiting/part-time staff who will not only work on the site but may also work at the Vidyapit.

Continuing on these lines I like to suggest that the research agenda of the Gujerat Vidyapit should be based on the problems of concern to the people it serves. The research output should materially improve the living conditions of the people in the villages/communities. It should also be disseminated in accepted ways, through publications, workshops and seminars, etc. The quality of the research should be judged by the extent to which it has contributed to improving the conditions of living of the people served by the Vidyapit and not so much by the number of publications in journals. We should be bold enough to adopt our own criteria for "academic success".

With all these recommendations you might well wonder whether the Gujerat Vidyapit should give up the diplomas and degrees and other academic distinctions a university is traditionally expected to grant to its successful students. This does not necessarily follow.

The essence of what I am suggesting is a new meaning to "academic distinctions". I put forward to you a challenge. An academic distinction from Gujerat Vidyapit should have associated with it, not only a learned tome duly published and catalogued in a scholarly journal, but much more importantly, a measurable impact on improving the quality of life of the poor whether in India or elsewhere, indicated by the extent to which they are able to meet their basic human needs.

In conclusion I wish state that I cannot think of any other educational institution than the Gujeraj Vidyapit which has gone thus far in implementing the Gandhian vision of education. So all of us in other parts of the world are looking up to you to blaze new paths which we can follow. I wish the new graduates a very constructive and happy future. Thank you once again for your kind invitation to me to this auspicious occasion and your patience in listening to me.

32nd WEDC International Conference
Sustainable Development of Water Resources,
Water Supply and Environmental Sanitation Sponsored by Institution of Engineers in Sri Lanka
13th November 2006 at BMICH Colombo

THE NEED FOR A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO WATER

Just over one year ago at the invitation of the Institution 0f Engineers in Sri Lanka I delivered the Sanmugam Arumugam Commemoration Centenary Oration on "Science and Civilization in Sri Lanka." Now again you have invited me to give the keynote address at this 32nd International Conference on Sustainable Development of Water Resources, Water Supply and Environmental Sanitation. This is an equally hard task for me as I am neither an engineer nor an expert on the subject. My only qualification to talk to you is that I love the rural poor very much and have been associated with them for over fifty years as a volunteer to help them to overcome poverty and powerlessness. In the process I have learnt a lot from them and gathered valuable experience about their problems and possible ways to find solutions. Furthermore I learnt very much about those who exploit and oppress them and devoted my whole life to experiment with non-violent solutions to bring true freedom to their lives.

I would like to speak to you from a perspective I generally look at any subject. Here we are going to discuss about Water – Water Resources, Water Supply, Pollution and Purification of Water, Institutional and Management Issues and so on. I am sure you are experts on all these fields and during the Conference Sessions you will share your knowledge on these subjects with one another. So without trying to speak about subjects I do not know much about I will try to look at water from my general perspective. In other words I will ask the following questions pertaining to Water:

* How am I (the individual) related to Water ?
* How is my family related to Water ?
* How is my community in relationship to Water?

* How is my (ecological) area in relationship to Water ?
* How is my country in relationship to Water ?
* How is my world in relationship to Water ?

Related to these six questions there are six other questions that come to my mind. Without answering these also we cannot get a holistic vision of the importance and use of water.

* Is there any spiritual significance for water?
* Is there any moral significance for water ?
* Is there any cultural significance for water ?
* Is there any social significance for water ?
* Is there any economic significance for water ?
* Is there any political significance for water ?

We Sri Lankans are very proud of our ancient water and soil conservation ecosystems (irrigation systems). I think most of us look at the flawless planning, extremely efficient engineering feats, marvelous water distribution, conservation and management systems but forget the fact all these took place in a holistic system with a clear and an integrated vision of man, society and nature.

We know from historical sources that Prince Anuradha constructed the first village tank, while it was during King Pandukabhaya's period that the three tanks Jayavapi, Gaminivapi and Abhayavapi were systematically constructed. Then in the third century B.C., during the reign of King Devanampiyatissa, Arahant Mahinda brought Buddha Dhamma to Sri Lanka which really laid the foundation for the great Sinhala Buddhist Culture that evolved in this land.

Starting with the Devanampiyatissa period and ending after the period of Parakramabahu the Great, a period of more than one thousand years saw the flowering of Buddha Dhamma in its spiritual, moral, cultural, social, political and economic dimensions of which our water systems were undoubtedly an integral part. Sri Lanka came to be known as Dhanyagara (Land of Plentiful Harvests) and Dharmadweepa (Land of Righteousnesss). The Tank (wewa), Dagaba (Stupa), Village (gama) and the temple (Pansala) were the four symbols of our community life.

In India or Sri Lanka as a guest comes to the house a clean glass of water is offered. When one leaves the house at an

auspicious time someone is made to walk with a glass of water towards the house to become the first to meet him. If a woman with a pot full of water meets you as you leave the house that is supposed to be a sign of success in your journey. When a daughter is given in marriage her parents bring the right hand fingers of the couple together and pour water as a blessing chanting a gatha which says 'May you be Blessed by the Triple Gem and the Devas'. On occasions when sutras taught by the Buddha are chanted sometimes all night by the monks always a clean pot of water is kept in front of the monks and one end of the thread which is held by the monks is inserted in the water and tied to the neck of the pot. When that ceremony which is known as the pirith ceremony is over we hold our palms together and receive the blessed water from the monks to drink and sprinkle on our faces. When we dig up and build a new well or a community water service project the first water we get from that source is filtered with a clean white cloth and taken in procession to the sacred Bodhi Tree in the temple and poured at the roots as an act of sacred worship.

We always attached sanctity to water and treated it as something sacred. Our parents taught us never to spit on water or pollute water sources. Water is a part and parcel of our life and existence. It is more than a human need for us. Access to water is an unalienable Human Right.

In other words I am trying to look at water as an integral part of our existence. Same is true for all our families, communities, nations and the world. This holistic vision of water always brings to our mind that from the conception of our life in the mother's womb when, may be 99% of our physical body was water, at birth 90% and as an adult 70%. At the end of our life it comes down to 50% when no longer we can sustain this body. Thinking of this scientific truth brings to our mind another scientific fact that water cannot exist alone and it is always combined with earth, air, and heat in space. Everything in this world, both living and non-living, therefore, being composed of these five great elements, we see a physical interrelationship and an interdependence between everything that exists. In our Buddhist Culture we believe that our consciousness (Vinnana), causes the mind-matter (Nama/Rupa)

condition to arise. These in turn give rise to the six sensory organs (Salayatana). From these organs we receive through light, sound, smell, taste, touch and thoughts, communications from outside which create thoughts and feed our inner consciousness.

You may have read the book The Hidden Messages in Water by the eminent Japanese scientist Dr.Masaru Emoto. "Using high speed photography he discovered that crystals formed in frozen water reveal changes when specific, concentrated thoughts are directed towards them". " .. human consciousness can have an enormous impact on the world around us. Clouds consists of water in the gaseous state, and so it responds especially quickly to our will. Traditionally speaking, anyone who says that consciousness has an effect on the physical world risks certain ostracization for being unscientific. However science has progressed to a point where the failure to understand consciousness and the mind limits our understanding of much of the world around us". (quoted from page 86 of the book-2001)

Dr.Masaru Emoto continues to make the following statement (pages 51-52 of the book.) "The defiling of our earth is the result of an unrelenting hunger for convenience and the fulfillment of greed initiated by the industrial revolution. This has led to life styles of mass consumption that seriously threaten the global environment.

"We have embarked on a new century, a time in history when we must make serious changes in the way we think. Only the human can resonate with the rest of the world, and this why it is so essential that we change our thinking, so we can live in harmony with nature and not go on destroying the earth. What vibration we give to the earth and what kind of planet we create depends on each one of us as individuals."

Dr.Emoto's discovery that molecules of water are influenced by our words, thoughts and feelings was quite consistent with what our ancients believed and practiced through various customs associated with their daily life and whatever they did for their livelihood. I have participated in many community practices like ceremonies and mass meditations associated with bringing rain to drought affected areas. We were always successful if we did them

with conviction and feelings. Reading through ancient history from the time the very first irrigation tank, Basawakkulama was constructed to the time our forefathers constructed the massive tanks like Kalawewa, Minneriya, Parakrama Sagara and Parakrama Samudra and networks of distribution systems, we come across numerous stories of events where the scientific and engineering skills have been combined with spiritual, moral and cultural practices.

Recently I read a book written in Sinhala titled "Ape wewen pan dothak" (A handful of water from our Tank) – A scholarly study of the Sinhala Tank by K.M.I. Swarnasinghe, published by Chaga Prakashana, Pannipitiya. In this excellent scholarly study I found the most comprehensive and concise information about both these aspects, Science and Technology and Spirituality in the context of our ancient Sinhala Wewa. I think the members of the Institution of Engineers in Sri Lanka should read this book if you have not yet done so. If possible the author should be persuaded and helped to bring out an English and Tamil translation as well. This book covers the History of Sinhala Wewa, Builders of wewas, Consumption and management of the water system, Parts of a wewa and the technology associated with it, Customs and Religious practices associated with the wewa, Folk tales, poems, special language etc associated with the Wewa etc.

We cannot possibly deal adequately with the topic of your Conference without dealing with the use of water for agriculture. Whatever experts may say about the contribution of agriculture to our GDP, I firmly believe that we should produce our own food. We have done so in the past and we should do so in the future. There is a concern about the pollution of ground water supplies due to excessive use of chemical fertilizers. This means that we should be concerned with the farming practices as well. I am glad to note that organic farming is being encouraged.

The point I am trying to make is that without a holistic approach to the subject of water including spiritual, mental, emotional, cultural, social, political and economic aspects, fragmented approaches to the problem of water will take us no where. When the approach is holistic the people come into the picture not as consumers but as the decision makers to lay down

policies, choose technologies and even organize the institutional arrangements for conservation, use, cleanliness and economic aspects of water. This is how our forefathers dealt with water up to the end of the twelfth century. Then due to foreign invasions the Raja Rata was depopulated and the land went under forest cover and our culture and civilization was destroyed along with the unique tank and irrigation systems which provided water for our daily use as well as agriculture to acquire three harvests.

More than the Portuguese and the Dutch the British contributed very subtly to the destruction of our civilization from nineteenth century onwards. However we must be grateful to the British scholars who recorded the story of this great water management system. We should be ever grateful to the great scholar Joseph Needham and our own scholars Dr. R. L. Brohier, Engineer S. Arumugam Dr.Siran Deraniyagala and Engineer D.L.O. Mendis just to name a few whose works I have read. In an introduction written for Engineer D.L.O.Mendis's book Water Heritage of Sri Lanka, Dr.Siran Deraniyagala gives an excellent summary in the following words (page xx, para 2) :

"Hence one may reasonably propose that the distinct water management systems of Sri Lanka had their origins in technological developments that occurred during the proto historic Early Iron Age at 1000 t0 500 BC . It constituted the springboard for what followed during the Early and Middle Historic periods up to the end of the first millennium AD: the development of a water management system that in its technology and organization has been unparalleled in its sophistication elsewhere in the world. The famed scholar Joseph Needham bears witness to this assertion."

In spite of a largely self-reliant, people-centred, ecologically viable and sustainable system which was historically proven to be correct our engineers and political decision makers preferred imported transferred technology or hydraulic engineering over our traditional knowledge of water and soil conservation ecosystems, soft technology we had mastered over more than a thousand years. The result was the corruption and finally the destruction of ancient irrigation systems. I read a paper presented by Engineer D.L.O.Mendis at a Pugwash Conference in 1995 where he refers to the non-availability of scale one mile to an inch maps showing in

great detail the ancient irrigation works, most of them lying abandoned in the jungles that time. Over a period of eighty years the British surveyors completed this extensive topographical survey. These maps showed small, medium scale and large reservoirs, river diversion anicuts and channels, including trans-basin diversion channels, cultural sites and religious monuments.

I remember as laymen our using these one inch maps in a number of places where we had farms like Ruwanmaduwa about 18 miles into the jungle in Vavuniya (1968) and the 500 acre farm we established in Tanamalwila in 1972. It is regrettable that the Survey Department for whatever reason does not publish these maps and they are said to be not available even for reference. They are now replaced by metric sheets compiled from aerial surveys. In these sheets it is said that all our ancient sites and monuments comprising our ancient cultural and economic heritage are not shown. It is also said that the ancient irrigation systems are not given a place in the much vaunted National Atlas of Sri Lanka.

If these maps were available and used in all our schools to teach the students about the topography and ecology of their area what a tremendous impact that would have had to link them with their traditional past and the present environment. For as the Indian savant D. D. Kossambi said: "To learn about the past in the light of the present is to learn about the present in the light of the past".

In the beginning of my speech you may remember I mentioned the twelve perspectives from which I am used to look at any subject because I strongly believe that we should take a holistic look at our situations. Taking the above examples that I cited one can detect an inferiority complex on our part where we underestimate our abilities and under value what we have inherited. Also we have become believers in macro-economics, macro-planning and macro-projects and ignored the micro-politics, micro-planning, micro-economics and micro-projects. We also have established top-down, centralized command systems ignoring people's participatory bottom-up management organizations. All these and many more servile borrowed systems have developed a very dependent mindset specially in our planners, bureaucrats and politicians. Their slavish mentality has gone down to the helpless people making this great nation to be dependent and controlled by

a handful of self-seeking local and foreign multi-nationals openly or secretly supported by powerful politicians.

I belong to a people's participatory development organization known as Sarvodaya. We work in around 15,400 village communities representing all racial and religious groups in all the districts of the country. As a part of our self-development programme we help villages to satisfy their basic human needs (which we believe are also their basic human rights) in which water takes priority next to the environment. Among different ways we help them to get water, Gravity Water Systems are one. Our engineers with the village people study the perennial sources of water for several months, test everything pertaining to the perennial source, the water flow, volume and speed, purity and so on. Locate places for the purification systems, storage tanks, distribution tanks, stand pipes, material costs, skilled labour costs and so on. People collect as much material as they can, donate as much money as they can and do all the unskilled labour as Shramadana (gift of labour). When the whole project is completed and handed over to the Water Management Committee of the Village Sarvodaya Shramadana Society along with the tools kit to maintain it with the village people who got trained in the process. Also a total education pertaining to water including spiritual and cultural aspects, economics of water management are given to the people. When a private individual who was not a member of the Society tried to illegally tap the water the society went to courts and got a ruling to control the catchment area and the entire water system. If villages have a system of Grama Swaraj or Village Self Government, for which Sarvodaya was campaigning for over four decades, that is the best political form to conserve, use, sustain and keep the purity of the system.

Sarvodaya Rural Technical Services Section completed 327 Gravity Water Schemes to benefit 24,141 families with a population of 147,103 during last twenty five years at a total cost of Rs.213,558,908.00. Sarvodaya did not receive one cent from the government. This self-help technology helped the villagers to bring water sometimes from sources as far as fifteen to twenty kilometers. To this day to my knowledge none of the bureaucrats who advice the government on water policies has ever visited and

seen what people have achieved. They only go on a merry- go-round with the political bosses and World Bank and Asian Development Bank and so on to write project proposals to get loans. These people have a great survival capacity even after retirement while increasing the foreign debts. For over 25 years Sarvodaya Economic Enterprises Development Services has experimented and developed a system of development finance where the people themselves are the masters of their savings and investments. Through this system without getting into the World Bank, Asian Development Bank 'debt trap' our people can continue to have control over their Basic Human Right to Water.

Sarvodaya involvement with village communities with regard to water is not only gravity water schemes. As 72% of Sri Lankans use ground water both wells for drinking water and agro-wells are constructed in Sarvodaya villages in very large numbers. Clean water holes, small water falls, small water collection facilities, small village tanks and sometimes medium size village tanks are renovated, constructed and maintained by the village society itself. Rainwater harvesting tanks are another popular activity for collection of water in rural areas which Sarvodaya promotes.

When Tsunami tragedy occurred on 26th December 2004 Sarvodaya was the first to go to the affected 12 districts and use her experience immediately to put into action its Five R Programme, namely, Relief, Rehabilitation, Reconstruction, Reconciliation and Reawakening. Sarvodaya programme included 12 integrated sectors including Water and Sanitation, Health and Preventive Care and Environmental Management and Ecology. While local people as well as the international community gave the movement unstinted support Sarvodaya was able to complete water, sanitation and environmental projects in four districts within six months in addition to work in other twelve sectors in all districts which still continue. I want to emphasize the fact with the participation of people in freedom miracles can happen in any field. Our foremost attention should be paid to the Awakening of the individual, the family and the community to the importance was water in their life. When the necessary scientific data with regards to the ecological factors and the alternative technologies that can be used are placed

before the community they are able to make the right choices, according to my view.

(As the participants of this conference will be visiting some projects in the Kalutara District I like to invite them to visit Lagoswatta near Katukurunda Police Training School where we have built with the participation of people whose houses were washed away a new Eco Village on the above mentioned principles. We have named the village Damniyamgama which means a village where natural laws are not violated.)

Looking at the country as a whole I think even though belated we have to get back to the ancient path of traditional water management systems at least in principle and incorporate those with the modern. We have to take a scientific and holistic view of the country as a whole as our forefathers did in the past and consider when and where we went wrong. Maybe we have to go to the times when the British undertook the task of restoring some of the large as well as medium and small tanks. Then the colonization projects with new settlement schemes by restoring major ancient reservoirs were implemented adopting the hydraulic engineering perspective. In spite of the fact that Udawalawe and Lunugamvehera were failures as most believe why are some people pushing Moragaskanda Project which will erase for ever the remains of Parakrama Sagara? A supreme Court Judgement by Hon.Justice A.R.B.Amerasinghe stopped the Eppawala Phosphate mining business which would have exhausted the deposit in thirty years as opposed to the possibility of its sustainable use for over a thousand years. It was the courageous stand taken by people led by the Eppawala high priest Ven. M.Piyaratana Thero that stopped this project. If this is allowed to be implemented by local and multinational companies who have notorious records of how they raped poor nations of their natural resources to make profit our most precious ancient Kalawewa Jayaganga water and soil conservation ecosystem built about 15 centuries ago, still functioning, truly a wonder of the world will also be destroyed.

I remember when the accelerated Mahaweli Development Project was promoted and advertised we were told that we can sell electricity to South India. Isn't it funny that in today's papers (2006.11.08) there was a news item that we are going to buy

electricity from South India. Please ask yourselves what went wrong.

In the case of Lunugamvehera project started with an estimated cost of US$ 30.5 million was escalated to cost US$ 106 million two years after implementation started without considering an alternative upstream site at Huratgamuva against the advice of the Planning Ministry engineers. The corresponding benefits were probably exaggerated to justify the increased foreign borrowing. In all these dealings then and now the public is kept ignorant. While the bureaucrat who pushed this deal is said to have retired from the public service and joined the World Bank, the adverse environmental impacts of the project increase with each passing day.

In your conference programme I saw a number of specialist sessions listed on various important subjects. Now I will touch upon a subject which is not included there. That is who owns water, who controls water, who wants to convert water into a tradable commodity, who wants to make water a lucrative money making business and at whose cost. This is the real issue we have to address taking into account what is already happening in the world at this time.

In this connection I wish to draw your attention to an advertisement in the Daily News of October, 9, 2006 published by the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Mahaweli Development. It is for "Entertaining Public Views" on a draft "National Water Resources Management Policy". I am very glad that public views are being sought. However most people in our country are not experts in interpreting official documents. Statements in the advertisement, such as the following, need further elaboration.

6.1 Ownership

All water resources including rainwater surface and ground water in Sri Lanka is a public asset.

6.2 Water Rights

6.2.2 Water rights will be transferable subject to regulation and zoning stipulations based on national interest.

While this attempt at obtaining the views of the public is to be commended, it is by no means adequate. An opportunity should be given to people's organizations at the community level to discuss this policy statement in depth.

In the FRONTLINE – India's National Magazine – of April 21 2006 the Cover page carried a picture of a child holding the two palms to a standpipe and drinking water. This reminded me of the pintaliya a pot of clean water kept on the roadside to quench the thirst of anybody walking past. In India also there were Jalmandirs or Piyaas, free water stands people could use. Under the picture was the Headline "THIRST FOR PROFIT : Water, a common resource of humanity , is the latest target of private greed."

In a well researched and documented Cover Story the writer P.Sainath very forcefully states "The corporate hijack of water is on and if the current trend continues, India's water supply sources will be in private hands before long.....Worldwide, water privatization could be multi-trillion-dollar industry in the future. It has produced massive failures, colossal corruption, and huge misery for the poor. A corrupt Indian elite, too, will rake in big bucks."

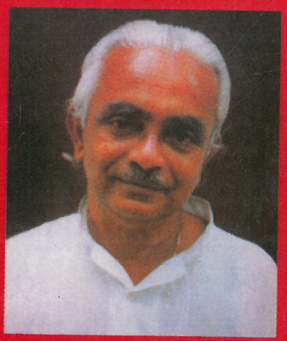
In the following sub-story titled Private Water, public misery the writer asserts "A river is sold to a private party in Chhattisgarh, a soft- drink major is battling local residents in Kerala. In Maharashtra, water supply for an entire town is private business. The corporate invasion results mainly in the poor being denied water."

Once and for all we have to understand that the five great elements in our body or in any thing else, namely, the Earth, Water, Air, Heat and Space cannot be tradable commodities. They cannot be privatized. Water is a Human Right which cannot be denied and taken away by multinational corporations well entrenched warming with the lending agencies, dealing with water as a commodity. They have their counterparts in Sri Lanka who are well equipped to propagate their point of view that leads to privatization of water resources.

I like to say, before I conclude this address, that though you all are professionals you also have a great responsibility

towards your own personality awakening, towards your family, the community, nation and the world. This awakening will not occur until and unless you grasp the three fundamental causes or the three negative energies that create all the suffering in all of us. They are Greed, Ill-will and Ignorance. In today's world these three evils are so well organized in the world as never before. They have coined beautiful words like globalization, free market economy and so on to cover up their evil intentions. These are so well institutionalized by the world's largest financial controllers led by the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, Pan American Bank and other subsidiary organizations like governments, central banks and multinational corporations. There many publications that have come out recently which have been authored by scholars who in fact have served in these institutions. At least try to read Al Gore's book, 'An Inconvenient Truth' on Global Warming. Al Gore was twice the Vice President of the United States. To understand how the World Bank contributes to perpetuate poverty in the world and continue to keep common people powerless please read MORGAGING THE EARTH – The World Bank, Environmental impoverishment and the Crisis in Development, by Bruce Rich, a senior attorney and Director of the International Program of the Environmental Defence Fund.

Finally, I appeal to you please don't allow greed to interfere with what you think is best for the earth and humanity. We have been brought to this sad state in Sri Lanka as well as in many other countries because of politicians, businessmen, bureaucrats and technocrats who allowed greed for wealth and power to control their precious lives. They always ended in grief.



Dr. A. T. Ariyaratne is the Founder/Leader of the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement in Sri Lanka. Four decades ago, he worked in a rural village and together with the people, developed a philosophy and a Movement which is known as Sarvodaya. In it, the awakening of everyone is symbolised. Today it has spread into many parts of Sri Lanka and to some parts of the world too.

Ariyaratne was inspired by Vinobha Bhave and Mahatma Gandhi. Buddhistic experience in Sri Lanka were added to this inspiration. Today the Movement works for everyone, regardless of race, creed, caste or colour. It is a unique philosophy based on potential greatnes of human beings.

In these eight volumes what Ariyaratne wrote during the last four decades are collected. The beginning of Sarvodaya and its gradual development are reflected here. As Ariyaratne travelled around the world the influences he encountered and how he looked at such influences are seen in these volumes. The essays are refreshingly original and they contain what man should do in order to establish peace within himself and with the world. Ariyaratne's essays are a tribute to his spiritual explorations into himself and into the world.

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